THE
NATION

APRIL 27, 1957 . . 25c

SPRING BOOKS

Decline of American Humor

The Need to Risk Tragedy

American Writers & British Readers

Dreiser & Lawrence

Richard Hoggart	Maxwell Geismar	Kristin Hunter
E. L. Mayo	R. J. Kaufmann	R. D. McIlnay
Thom Gunn	W. S. Merwin	Harold Clurman
Jacob Korg	R. W. Flint	Maurice Grosser
Kenneth Rexroth	Donald Sutherland	Robert Hatch

WONDER PROFITS IN WONDER DRUGS

Milton Moskowitz

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LETTER from LONDON

Paul Johnson

London

ALTHOUGH the threatened strike in the shipbuilding and engineering industries, which would have led to Britain's biggest industrial stoppage since the 1926 general strike, has been postponed while a Ministry of Labor court of inquiry examines its causes, well-informed people here are uneasily aware that the country is entering a prolonged period of labor unrest. Not since the 1930s have industrial relations been so strained, and the new atmosphere has been forcibly expressed by the tone of statements on both sides. "This time we do not want government interference; we want to fight it out ourselves," said Sir William Grant, spokesman for the employers; and Mr. Ted Hill, secretary of the Boilermakers and the most prominent labor figure in the dispute, has made his intentions equally plain: "The interests of my union come before the interests of the country, and I intend to protect them," he has said. Ordinary people, who do not understand the complexity of the problem, have been baffled and angered by this display of intransigence on both sides which comes when the competition for vital export markets is fiercer than ever, and when the country is still suffering the effects of the Suez oil crisis. "Employers and the unions," as one editorial writer put it, "seem to be engaged in a race towards industrial suicide."

Yet the omens have been threatening for some time; the present crisis is not a sudden and inexplicable outburst of mutual folly, but the culmination of a process which dates back to the formation of Sir Winston Churchill's government in 1951. Under the two post-war Labor governments, the government and the trade unions, for the first time in British history, developed a working partnership. The Chancellor of the Exchequer formed the habit of consulting representatives of the Trades Union Congress before taking important decisions, and its views undoubtedly played a major part in shaping economic and financial policy. In return, the congress tried to preserve industrial peace, and in the main succeeded in doing so. Under the leadership of Arthur Deakin, Ernest Bevin's successor as secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, the T.U. bosses restrained wage demands, encouraged negotiation rather than stoppages and fought bitter battles against "unofficial" strikes. This policy of wage-restraint, however, was only made possible by a parallel attempt, on the part of the government, to keep prices down by food and housing subsidies, bulk purchasing, price controls over a wide range of commodities and forcible dividend restraint.

WITH the advent of the Conservative government, however, the system began to break down. The Korean rearmament boom had already strengthened inflationary tendencies within the economy; when the Tories took office, prices had begun to rise. Instead of increasing subsidies, however, Mr. Butler, the Tory chancellor, began progressively to reduce them, and the process was continued under his successor, Mr. Macmillan. Visible controls—in the form of import and building licenses, to name two of the most important—were abolished, and dividend restraints were lifted. During the stock-exchange boom of 1952-53, it is calculated that investors made capital gains in the region of £2,000 million ($5.6 billion), and industrial-share returns doubled in this period. Prices, especially food prices, rose rapidly, and Mr. Butler completed the inflationary slide in his last budget by slashing income tax and thus pumping a further annual £300 million ($840 million) purchasing-

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PAUL JOHNSON is assistant editor of the New Statesman and Nation.

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THE NATION

EDITORIALS

The Wisdom of the Defeated

It is ironic that eighteen of the leading nuclear physicists of West Germany should be the first group of important nuclear scientists in any nation to declare publicly that they would refuse to cooperate in any way in the production, testing or use of atomic weapons. In 1950 a group of American nuclear scientists urged Washington not to go ahead with a "crash program" on the H-bomb until further efforts had been made to negotiate an agreement with the Russians, but they did not announce their refusal to participate in a nuclear-weapons program. It is also ironic that the eighteen German scientists who signed the statement, which was issued through the Max Planck Institute, should include consistent and courageous anti-Nazis like Max von Laue, ambiguous figures like Werner Heisenberg, and active Nazi collaborators like Rudolph Fleischmann. Apparently there is no substitute for military defeat as a means of inducing a group of scientists of divergent political views to unite in making an unprecedented statement against nuclear war.

The Trade Wall With Holes

Washington

Despite recent rattling of H-bombs on both sides of the curtain, we are about to witness the partial dismantling of cold-war armament. By the time this is in print, Chincom (a committee comprising the NATO states minus Iceland and plus Japan, which regulates trade with Red China) may have met in Paris to discuss loosening of trade restrictions against Peking.

Since the Korean war ended almost four years ago, the embargo against China has been a divisive issue between America and its allies. The British and others consider themselves at peace with the People's Republic of China; furthermore, they hold that trade barriers against the Communist camp should be largely limited to weapons. By contrast, the United States behaves as though we are still at war. Under our total embargo, it is a penal offense to send anyone in China so much as a set of knitting needles or a birthday cake.

There is another difference between ourselves and our allies on China trade policy. The British and other governments, and especially Japan, have been subject to home pressures to open the gate to China; except for a few isolated voices like those of Henry Ford II, head of the motor company, and John S. Coleman, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, very few Americans have been demanding a change in our anti-Chinese embargo. Nevertheless, the problem has been the focus of hot domestic argument for several years. One school holds that by continuing the embargo, we perpetuate Chinese demands on the Soviet economy and thus increase the drain on the USSR's resources. Against this, it is contended that by denying our goods to China, we prolong and intensify that country's dependence on Russia. It is argued, moreover, that our policy of maintaining a much tougher trading blacklist against Communist China than against the rest of the Communist block has become meaningless. China has only to order rubber or some other embargoed merchandise through Moscow, Prague or Warsaw, and the goods are promptly forwarded.

Fifteen months ago Sir Anthony Eden flew to Washington and explained all this at the White House. President Eisenhower promised that his Administration would review our China trade policy. The survey was undertaken, secretly. It has since developed that the Defense Department, almost alone, successfully opposed lifting the lid. At Bermuda last month, Mr. Eisenhower told British Minister Harold Macmillan that public opinion in America wouldn't stand for any softening of our stand.

But now the President is apparently prepared to lead public opinion. At his news conference the other day, he defended Japan's desire to carry on commerce with mainland China, saying in effect that it's ridiculous for U.S. industry to insist on protective tariffs and import quotas against Japanese products while simultaneously demanding that we prevent Japan from trading with its Chinese neighbor.

In finally exposing the truth on this issue, President Eisenhower was making a virtue of necessity. The British, Japanese, French, Belgians, Italians and others have notified us that they intend to expand their

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trade with China, whether or not we go along. We are sustaining our own embargo, but we are about to resign ourselves to looking the other way while our friends build up their business with the Chinese.

Management–Still Missing

The Select Senate Committee on Improper Activities in the Labor-Management field is rapidly becoming a committee to investigate labor, period. Its counsel complains, self-consciously, that management officials have not come forward in droves to testify. Did he really think they would be anxious to sit down before the microphones and testify on matters savoring of bribery or acquiesence in extortion? There are some reticences which management shares with labor. But the committee has the power of subpoena, ample funds and a large staff; it should have no difficulty in getting at the real issue which is, of course, collusion.

Ordeal of Counsel

Leo Sheiner, a member of the Florida bar and a principal victim of the Miami witch-hunt (see: *The Nation*, August 7, 1954 and January 22, 1955), has finally won complete vindication in another of the long, painful ordeals of the cold-war years. In April, 1954, charges were filed with the Florida bar that Mr. Sheiner, who represented other victims of the Miami witch-hunt, had pleaded the Fifth Amendment in refusing to answer questions before the Senate Internal Security subcommittee. He was summarily disbarred. Later the Florida Supreme Court reversed the order on the ground that pleading a Constitutional right was not *per se* cause for disbarment. On re-trial, only two witnesses testified against Mr. Sheiner, once a professional informer whose testimony has since been repudiated by the Department of Justice. Once again disbarment was ordered. On a second appeal, the Florida Supreme Court took cognizance of the fact that the informer's testimony might be perjured and remanded the case for further consideration without reference to his testimony. On April 5, 1957, Circuit Judge Ray Pearson dismissed the proceedings and thus, after three years, the ordeal of Leo Sheiner has come to an end.

It is worth noting, as a postscript, that once the testimony of the informer was thrown out, the only evidence offered against Mr. Sheiner was that of a self-confessed former Communist Party member who testified that on one occasion Sheiner had been introduced to him as "a member of the party." On this spectral testimony, Mr. Sheiner had to endure the ordeal and expense of two disbarment proceedings, two appeals to the Florida Supreme Court and three year's abstention from the practice of his profession. But perhaps the ordeal served a purpose, for it is now the law of Florida, thanks to *Florida vs. Sheiner*, that ". . . Claiming the privilege against self-incrimination is not a disgrace. It isn't to be construed as an inference of guilt or that the one who claims it is addicted to criminal tendencies. It may be claimed by the innocent as well as the guilty, and this exercise may not be considered a breach of duty to the court."

UAW: Lull Between Storms . . *by Dan Wakefield*

Atlantic City

FROM THE stormy days of the sitdown strikes, the United Auto Workers moved to the gray, uncertain weather of Atlantic City early this month for their sixteenth constitutional convention and prepared for the huge new season ahead. The U.A.W. is 1,320,000 strong and an institution now, and has been duly inflicted with the knowledge of all who are middle-aged that history is like a soap opera. No sooner does the family assemble in hard-won peace and comfort, when someone looks out the window and sees that the yard is on fire and the Apaches are coming. It is time again for prayer and action.

The U.A.W. took plenty of both in the week of its convention, which marked, among other milestones, the first time its sessions were opened each day not only with a prayer but with a speech by a visiting clergyman. The delegates were told twice on the second morning that whatever else might be done, the rank-and-file members of the union would have to get down on their knees with regularity and say their prayers if they hoped to be saved. It was a sentiment that might have seemed out of place just a little more than a year ago at the AFL-CIO merger convention, when the prayers were all of thanksgiving; but that was a different climate. There is now Senator McClellan with the tarnished soul of Dave Beck for all the suspecting public to see, and the anti-union legislators fresh from right-to-work law triumph in Indiana and hungry for more. There is also the new automation revolution and its resulting decentralization, which is already starting to split the old centers of power and spray the survivors to the hinterlands.

Walter Reuther's revolutionary victory of yesterday, the Guaranteed Annual Wage, holds no salvation from the automation problem that has already permanently put 24,000 workers in Detroit out of their jobs this year and threatens more. Not only does the G.A.W.

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look less like the instrument of total salvation it seemed such a short while ago, but there is now the discovery that in it were the seeds of what has come to be the U.A.W.'s greatest internal dilemma. That is the battle of the skilled-trades workers (tool-and-die makers, electricians, carpenters, metal workers are some of the main skilled classifications) to see that their skills are rewarded at the bargaining table and kept at proportionately higher pay scales than the production workers.

This was the knottiest issue the convention had to deal with. The fact that the sessions were not torn apart with a fight reminiscent of the U.A.W.'s brawling days was simply because the heretical demand of the skilled-trades workers for separate power within the union had already been incorporated into the doctrine of the international.

THE STORY goes back to June of 1955, when the dawn of a new day was announced in the form of a G.A.W. victory, and in turn was hooted and booed by the skilled-trades workers in the union. Since the war, the skilled men had experienced hardly any unemployment problem themselves, and therefore felt the G.A.W. was of little benefit to them. Many felt that the money that went into the G.A.W. fund should be used instead to boost wages. In short, they felt they were paying for what the non-skilled workers, who are the first victims of seasonal lay-offs, were getting.

Wildcat strikes led by skilled workers broke out at Ford and General Motors shortly after the G.A.W. settlement; one of them lasted eighteen days. Within the U.A.W., some of the skilled workers got together and formed an organization known as the Society of Skilled Trades. At first it acted as a pressure group within the union, and then, with swift gains in strength, began to operate also as a separate, independent union. Reports are that many skilled workers in the U.A.W. are secretly members of the Society, paying dues as a kind of insurance in case the U.A.W. doesn't come across with satisfactory concessions.

The U.A.W.'s own skilled-trade council met last year and passed a five-point program for the skilled trades which Reuther found so heretical that he barred it from the council's newspaper and talked of putting an "administrator" over the council if it continued to pursue such dangerous notions. But the heresy continued to spread, and became a concrete threat to the union's health and safety last fall when the U.A.W. lost its first election in many years to an outside union: 380 skilled workers at the Ford River Rouge plant went out of the United Auto Workers and into the former A. F. of L. Patternmakers of America, a typical craft union.

The heretical five-point program put forth by the U.A.W. skilled-trades council of a year ago—including the separate bargaining rights of the skilled workers—was substantially the same as the five-point program which was presented to the convention here by Reuther and passed at the insistent urging of the International Executive Board. The new program provides that skilled workers will be able to vote separately on "skilled" supplements to local or corporation contracts and have the right to elect their own representatives to local shop as well as national bargaining committees; that present maximum rates for skilled workers will be transformed into minimums; that a unified apprenticeship program will be carried out, raising the age limit to make it possible for present production workers to qualify for skilled training; and that new contracts will give skilled workers greater power to decide jurisdictional questions involving work for which other unions may be bidding.

The production workers, despite some early talk of protest, were properly impressed with the necessity of the new program, which was the main topic of talk outside the convention hall. Some pre-voting predictions of violent opposition to the new rights of the skilled minority (which composes between 150,000 and 200,000 of the union's 1,320,000 membership) turned out to be on a minor scale when the matter reached the convention floor. When the vote came, 95 per cent of the delegates approved the program.

The only other large-scale debate on the floor came on the proposal to raise the dues from $2.50 to $3.00 a month, but it, like the skilled-trades question, was less violent than many had anticipated. The recent convulsions over dues increases that have shaken several unions spurred the U.A.W. to a major job of defense of the increase, and the three-hour debate that included twenty-four delegates speaking for the increase and as many against, found chairman Reuther, as in the skilled-trades debate, with moments of searching for an opposition speaker. The feeling of most of the delegates seemed to be summed up by Delegate Hall who in the waning minutes of the session, put on the record that "I can say for the brothers from our Local 1095 that $3 in dues is the biggest bargain since the white man bought Manhattan from the Indians for a string of beads and a sack of marbles."

The increase was passed by an overwhelming majority, and the request for a roll call could only muster several hundred delegates.

THIS WAS a far cry from the upsurge of protest that shook the United Steelworkers after a dues raise from $3 to $5 a month last fall. Dave McDonald is still sweating on the throne after an expensive campaign for re-election to his presidency failed to stop an obscure dues-rebel candidate from polling close to a third of the vote. The position of sanctity that McDonald so desires in his own union is occupied with glory to spare by Walter Reuther in the U.A.W.

The demonstration for his re-election, complete with placards and colored balloons, was a joyous procession in which each delegate had his chance to march past the throne and meet the master. The oldtimers beamed, the young blew sirens, and on the platform during the spectacle a couple of delegates who still were playing cops and robbers the day that Reuther was beaten by Ford agents broke out of line to dance a jitterbug. The ritual of nominating Carl Stellato, Reuther's traditional opponent from Detroit's Local 600, had been performed earlier by some

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sad delegate who failed to dredge up any sentiment even by noting his candidate's lack of balloons. Brother Stellato, noting his lack of support, duly declined the nomination.

The sanctity of Reuther's leadership, challenged by few institutions in the country aside from Joe McCarthy, the N.A.M. and the Indianapolis *Star*, was stamped for future safety by announcement of the "watch-dog committee" in the early part of the convention. This seven-man committee of leading citizens had suddenly had their role re-emphasized to meet the changing times after Senator McClellan went to work on Beck and the Teamsters. Originally, the committee was to serve solely as a court of appeal for members who were not satisfied with decisions from the union's machinery of judgment. Now, a man who takes his case as high as the International Executive Board and still is not satisfied with the outcome, may either make a new appeal to the executive Board or appeal instead to the Public Review Board (the "watch-dog committee").

The strongest emphasis, publicity-wise, on the Public Review Board was placed on its role as a "watch-dog" which presumably would keep an eye out to see that no Beck-like maneuvers were going on in the union. Actually, there is nothing in the resolution creating the board that gives it specific powers for such investigation, though union officials told the press that the board would have power to conduct hearings and investigations on alleged violations of ethical practices. In any case, the "watch-dog" notion came not from rank-and-file protest, but strictly from the pressure of outside events. Most of the delegates would no more have thought of setting public police to keep an eye on Reuther than churchmen would think of getting private eyes to check on the doings of a bishop. A young delegate from Grand Rapids explained to an outsider that "Any guy in our local can look at the books any time he wants. Usually, someone asks to look at the books at least once a year. When the Beck thing came up, about thirty guys asked to see the books. It wasn't that they thought that stuff was going on in our union, but they wanted to have the satisfaction of knowing they were union members who could look at their books."

The main sore spot in ethical practices within the U.A.W. is the one that plagues the ethical practices of the entire United States. It flared in ugly heat at the opening of the convention in the case of George Holloway, a Negro who sits on the board of U.A.W. Local 988 (International Harvester) in Memphis and has been a delegate to the last four conventions. The White Citizens Council is now working within the local and it succeeded in blocking his election this year. But he still ran fourth in the voting for the three representatives, and when an automobile accident caused the death of one of the three elected delegates, Holloway asked to be seated. The two white delegates opposed the plea, and the credentials committee was powerless to do anything except sadly to accept the objections. The international executive board promised to do something about it, but the union constitution provides for no miracles. Even if it did, it would take a local miracle to do much for Holloway and the Negro workers in Memphis.

The problem is an old one for the U.A.W. dating back to the racial conflicts in Detroit that have slowly improved through an onslaught of educational efforts and constant work on the part of the international.

MOST OF THE U.A.W.'s problems are confusingly new; the skilled-trades questions against the background of a changing shift in the work force toward white-collar people; the elimination of the man on the line by automation and speed-up. The biggest current battle is being waged with Chrysler, whose vice president, F. W. Misch, recently told a New York audience that part of his company's 1957 boom was due to increased productivity through revised work standards. What constitutes "revised work standards" for the company means "speed-up" to the workers. After a period of loose policy on the speed-up problem by the international, local flareups have forced a new active stand. On February 26, U.A.W.'s national leaders negotiated with Chrysler on speed-up, calling off a full corporation strike but giving the local authority to strike on its own if unsatisfied with plant terms. Local 230 at Chrysler's Maywood, California, plant struck as production standards were upped from 473 to 534 cars a day. After two weeks of striking alone, the local was presented with a company proposal of 616 cars a day. The strike was still going on as the U.A.W. delegates convened here, and the presidents of the Chrysler locals met with Norman Mathews, a U.A.W. vice president, and decided to stop all overtime work at Chrysler plants in hopes of forcing a Maywood settlement—despite the fact that such an action violated the contract. Mr. Mathews told the convention that Chrysler was trying to break the union: he said, "To hell with the contract. We're going to fight."

The old words of passion were something of relief in the face of the new and complex problems. The threats are no longer as solid and easy to aim at as company servicemen armed with clubs.

The only surviving remainder of those gone times has been provided to the union and the country by Herbert V. Kohler, an employer who still keeps an arsenal of weapons at his company, and stumps the nation urging not the passage of right-to-work laws, but the elimination of collective bargaining. His workers have been on strike since April 5, 1954, and their strike is their life. The women make shirts and ties advertising the Kohler boycott and the kids sing in the Kohler chorus. They assembled at one of the convention parties, the kids bright-eyed and neat in yellow dresses and blue suits and sang "Solidarity Forever" and the crowd stood still all around them and a grey-haired man at the front kept whispering, "Ain't it wonderful? It's wonderful." The United Auto Workers have fought their way to the place where the Kohler strikers, in their struggle with a simple evil, are almost a quaint survival of the awful and glorious past. The automated future lies ahead.

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Wonder Profits in Wonder Drugs . . *by Milton Moskowitz*

WHEN A COMPANY increases its sales by more than 100 per cent in one year, without having made a major capital investment, eyebrows are likely to rise on Wall Street. When this freakish jump occurs in the ethical pharmaceutical industry, however, the eyebrows are not likely to go up so high. For the denizens of Wall Street have by now become immunized against shock resulting from the irregular fluctuations of a "wonder drug" economy. In the past ten years they have seen sales spurts as amazing as the drugs themselves.

The "wonder drug" era began in 1943 with penicillin. This first antibiotic was followed by a flood of new products—streptomycin, sulfas, vitamins, hormones, antihistamines, broad-range antibiotics and now the tranquillizers. From the health standpoint, it has been a marvelous period. From the standpoint of the financial well-being of the companies which make and sell these drugs, it has also been marvelous.

Sales of ethical drugs (an ethical drug is a pharmaceutical not advertised to the consumer and sold invariably through a doctor's prescription) have expanded from $200,000,000 in 1939 to $1.5 billion last year. Antibiotics, now a $350,000,000-a-year business, have been the biggest factor in this growth, but the tranquillizers are now coming up strongly. The tranquillizers, non-barbiturate drugs unknown to practicing physicians before 1954, are today selling at the annual rate of $125,000,000 (at manufacturers' prices). Of the ten leading prescription items in 1956, four were tranquillizers.

The most frequently prescribed drug in 1956 (as well as in 1955) was Achromycin, Lederle Laboratories' brand of tetracycline, a broad-range antibiotic. Achromycin is identical with the tetracycline marketed by other producers under different names. The Upjohn Company's brand is Panmycin; Chas. Pfizer & Company's, Tetracyn. In the struggle for the antibiotic business, Lederle—a division of American Cyanamid Company—and Pfizer have been hot competitors. Lederle edged ahead when its Aureomycin outsold Pfizer's Terramycin, and now Achromycin has given it a clear lead. Although Achromycin was the most frequently prescribed drug last year, the combined prescription orders for Equanil (Wyeth Laboratories) and Miltown (Wallace Laboratories), identical tranquillizers, exceeded those of Achromycin.

IN 1956, for the second consecutive year, more than 400 ethical drugs were introduced. In the pre-antibiotic year of 1940, manufacturers brought out fewer than a hundred. Equally impressive is the number of prescriptions being filled these days. According to the Medimetric Institute, druggists filled 629,000,000 prescriptions in 1956, compared to 577,000,000 in 1955. A 700,000,000 volume is predicted for 1957. *Drug Trade News* reports that the average cost of a prescription in 1956 was $2.49, compared to $2.33 in 1955.

In becoming a billion-dollar business, the pharmaceutical industry has changed from a small, quiet, orderly affair to a fast-moving, noisy, fiercely competitive operation. These changes are evident at many levels.

In the Laboratories. Research is the key to development of drugs and the ethical houses today race furiously with one another to bring out new products. The large pharmaceutical companies employ from 500 to 1,000 research scientists. Whereas the average cost of research in manufacturing industries is 1 per cent of sales, in the pharmaceutical industry the average is 5 per cent. Pfizer reported research expenditures of "close to $8,000,000" in 1956. Before the war, ethical-drug producers employed only a handful of researchers, relying on Europe and the universities for basic research. In today's competitive market, however, manufacturers simply cannot wait around for a university scientist to come up with an idea. The sales struggle has thus stimulated basic research in pharmaceuticals.

In the Marketplace. Fifteen years ago, the pharmacist, surrounded by his elixirs, compounded 75 per cent of the prescriptions ordered by doctors for patients. Today, nine out of ten prescriptions call for a drug already prepared by a manufacturer. Formerly written in Latin, the prescription now tends to be written in brand names. When your druggist asks you to wait fifteen minutes while he "prepares" your prescription, the chances are he is only trying to impress you. How long does it take to write a label and transfer some capsules from a large bottle to a small one?

In the Doctor's Mailbox. Ethical drugs cannot be promoted to the consumer and the sales pressure is therefore applied to the doctor. The ethical pharmaceutical industry today spends between $250,000,000 and $300,000,000 annually on "professional" advertising and various forms of sales promotion. "Detailing" (the personal call of a manufacturer's representative on the doctor) accounts for about 50 per cent of these expenditures. The industry is spending $1 out of every $5 in sales on promotional expenses—a proportion so high that few industries can match it. Direct mail to doctors has doubled in the past five years. The general practitioner in New York City now receives close to 5,000 pieces of direct mail a year!

From a strictly marketing view-

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point, the generating force in the ethical-drug business appears to be a crash-program of planned obsolescence. It is the great dream of the consumer-goods manufacturer to create sales by making his old products appear to be obsolete. But not even General Motors has been able to achieve the rapid-fire product turnover that prevails today in pharmaceuticals, thanks to the heavy investment in research. Products can be—and are—outdated in a matter of months. When a company introduces a new product, it is safe to assume it is already working to develop an improvement. And if it isn't, its competitors certainly are. Companies marketing a wide line of pharmaceuticals find themselves engaged in a delicate juggling act, with volumes shifting crazily from one product to another. The bulk of the business being done today is in products unheard of ten years ago.

Upjohn will introduce a new oral diabetic drug this year and the mad scramble is on among other producers to come up with a matching or superior entry. A lot is riding on this product; it threatens, for example, to destroy the long, well-established business Eli Lilly & Company has in insulin. (Aside from these purely marketing considerations, initial reports indicate that the Upjohn product will revolutionize diabetes treatment.)

THE MARKETING environment in pharmaceuticals was well sketched recently by Professor Thomas A. Staudt, chairman of the marketing department at Michigan State University. Addressing a group of pharmaceutical executives, Professor Staudt pointed out:

> Few products in this field have any definite assurance of a future share in the market. For every hundred products introduced, only eight will be among the best prescription sellers and high profit makers; another seven to ten will pay their own way; and the other 80 per cent will fail.

This high mortality rate, Professor Staudt noted, poses a major problem for companies in deciding on the promotional program for new products:

> In a recent two-year period, from 1952 to 1954, seventy-three new products were added to the best seller lists (products with 400,000 prescription sales a year or more), and seventy-eight were dropped. This means you have little time for experimentation in the promotional mix the way Gillette had when they came out with a patented razor with seventeen years of protection.

Being "first" with a new product is of prime importance in this kind of market. Since a new product has no guarantee of long life (in fact, it seems to be guaranteed a *short* life), the manufacturer is under pressure to recover costs and make a profit in the period immediately following introduction, when prices are high. There is a saying in the pharmaceutical business that "if you stay with a product too long, you run the risk of losing your profit"—and penicillin is usually cited to prove the point. In 1943, penicillin wholesaled for $20 per dose of 100,000 units and the twenty-nine pounds of production in that year was worth $3,000,000 — roughly $100,000 per pound. By 1953, the 750,000 pounds produced was worth only $50,000,000, or $65 a pound, as the price had dropped to one cent per dose of 100,000 units. In 1956, the price of penicillin nose-dived to three-tenths of a cent per dose of 100,000 units—and profit margins were virtually non-existent. Two producers, Commercial Solvents and Schenley Laboratories left the field because of diminishing profits.

What can happen when a producer is able to cash in effectively on a new product is illustrated by the recent experience of Schering Corporation. In 1954, Schering introduced a new cortical-steroid product for treatment of arthritis. Schering's sales in 1954 totalled $19,400,000, about the same as in 1953 and 1952. Its earnings per common share in 1954 were 89c, 10 per cent below its 1950 earnings. The new product, selling at a high price, won quick acceptance. In 1955, Schering posted sales of $46,000,000, a gain of almost 150 per cent. Earnings advanced to $4.71 per common share, a gain of better than 500 per cent. And one product was responsible.

Another new product, the Salk vaccine, has proved to be a bonanza for Eli Lilly, which accounts for about 60 per cent of the industry output of the product. In 1956, Lilly's Salk vaccine sales were $32,000,000, and its total sales volume jumped from $141,300,000 to $181,500,000. Net earnings increased by more than 75 per cent—from $2.12 to $3.82 per share.

THERE ARE some 250 ethical-drug manufacturers in the United States, with a dozen large producers dominating the business. In 1951, only two manufacturers—Lilly and Parke, Davis & Company—had sales in excess of $100,000,000. Today, there are at least eight companies above this mark, with several headed for the $200,000,000 level. The industry's "big ten" are: Lilly; Parke, Davis; Upjohn; Lederle Laboratories; Smith, Kline & French; American Home Products; Pfizer; Merck & Company; E. R. Squibb & Sons; and Abbott Laboratories. Success stories are common. Smith, Kline & French had sales of $39,000,000 in 1950; it reported $104,600,000 in 1956. Pfizer, which has chemical and animal-feed business as well as ethical drugs, leaped from $60,800,000 in 1950 to $178,400,000 last year. Merck & Co., another combination chemical and pharmaceutical producer, had a $94,100,000 business in 1950; sales last year were $172,400,000.

There are pitfalls attached to the ethical-drug business; witness Cutter Laboratories' troubles with the Salk vaccine and Parke, Davis' problems with Chloromycetin. Parke, Davis was on top of the ethical-drug heap in 1952, having just passed Lilly, when the American Medical Association announced that the company's new antibiotic, Chloromycetin, could cause serious blood breakdowns. In 1951, Chloromycetin sales were $52,400,000, accounting for more than one-third of Parke, Davis' total business. In less than a year, sales of the antibiotic were halved and the company's total volume skidded to $109,900,000. Chloromycetin sales have since recovered, but Parke, Davis' volume in 1956 was still $4,000,000 short of its 1951 high of $138,100,000.

While drug companies have long disseminated free samples and gaudy

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brochures to doctors, it is only recently that advertising outlays have mounted to such a high proportion of sales. Some producers—notably Upjohn; Parke, Davis; Smith, Kline & French and Pfizer—have even carried the attack to the consumer in the form of institutional advertising. Parke, Davis has concentrated its consumer advertising on improving doctor-patient relationship, thereby catering to its direct (the doctor) and indirect (the patient) customer in one shot. Your doctor, however, more than anyone else, is aware of the stepped-up promotional drives. He is literally deluged with sales ammunition; imagine, if you can, receiving ten sales appeals a day, plus regular calls from "detail" men.

THERE is increasing evidence that the doctor is fed up with the barrage of propaganda directed at him. One recent study showed that only 34 per cent of doctors were favorably disposed toward direct-mail advertising, as against 70 per cent ten years ago. Another study indicated that 41.4 per cent of doctors either "don't read" direct-mail ads or believe they have "no influence." The dominance achieved by the prepacked pharmaceutical has also strained doctor-manufacturer relations. Studies show that many doctors feel the mass-produced "wonder drugs" are robbing them of their reputation as the all-powerful healer.

Pharmaceutical-advertising men are aware of this resentment. In 1955, a number of leading pharmaceutical houses put up $7,500 to have the Institute of Motivational Research do a "deep survey" to unearth the underlying feeling of doctors toward promotion materials. The ad men tend to discount much of the "I'm not influenced by advertising" opinion expressed by doctors. This, they say, reflects the doctor's inclination to give a "socially acceptable answer." However, the pharmaceutical-ad men have also been perceptive enough to realize that in a situation characterized by a glut of promotional materials the way to more effective communications is through an improvement in the *quality* of the materials. They have been alert to develop new techniques to reach the eyes and ears of doctors. One such technique is closed-circuit television. *Grand Rounds,* a series of closed-circuit telecasts sponsored by Upjohn, has given national audiences of doctors an opportunity to observe top specialists working in operating rooms and diagnosing difficult cases. *Spectrum,* a bi-weekly magazine mailed

directly to doctors by Pfizer after running for four years as an advertising insert in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* is a first-class editorial product that has won wide acceptance.

New products and the need to reach the doctor quickly with information about them account for the drug industry's increasing reliance on advertising. The pharmaceutical men claim that not all of the broadsides directed at the doctor should be laid at the door of brand promotion. They point out, with cogency, that the new drugs were not known when the doctor was in medical school. Physicians therefore have to be told about them—how and when to use them. The ad men liken ethical-drug advertising to a post-graduate course for doctors. There is some justice in this assertion, but, of course, it is impossible to tell where the "education" leaves off and advertising begins. And this, after all, is the mark of a good sales piece: it informs or entertains the customer while selling him. In this respect, the consumer advertisers may have something to learn from the ethical-drug field.

So far the big Madison Avenue agencies, with only a few exceptions, have been unable to provide the specialized services and knowledge required by a maker of ethical drugs. As a result, this advertising is being handled, for the most part, by a group of specialized agencies, whose clientele is limited to the ethical-drug field. The largest of this group is William Douglas McAdams, Inc., which employs more than 300 persons to handle some $13,000,000 of ethical-drug advertising, promotion and public relations annually. McAdams has as its chairman a research psychiatrist, Dr. Arthur Sackler, and as its president, a graduate of Johns Hopkins Medical School, Dr. DeForest Ely. The agency employs thirty-seven doctors: twenty M.D.'s, twelve Ph.D.'s, three veterinarians, a dentist and an osteopath. The second largest advertising agency in the medical field is L. W. Frohlich & Company.

The expansion of ethical-drug advertising has naturally resulted in a great boom for the medical journals, which are getting fatter and fatter. A magazine that can show evidence of reaching the medical profession will be supported by the drug manufacturers. *MD,* a monthly medical news-magazine patterned after *Time* and *Newsweek,* was launched this year by Dr. Felix Marti-Ibanez, an alumnus of the McAdams agency and one-time minister of health in the pre-Franco Spanish Republican government. The first issue carried $50,000 worth of advertising. It has been a prosperous time, too, for the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* a prime medium for pharmaceutical advertisers. Despite the restrictions surrounding advertising in the *Journal,* in 1956 it carried no less than 5,200 advertising pages, more ad pages than appeared during the year in *Life* or *The Saturday Evening Post.* As a matter of fact, only five magazines in the country carried more ad pages in 1956 than the *Journal.* Since it now costs roughly $1,000 to buy a page in the AMA *Journal,* this makes for a hefty advertising revenue of $5,200,000 for

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the association. Another medical magazine, *Modern Medicine*, placed in seventeenth place among all magazines, with 3,875 pages of ads.

With the ethical-drug industry still in what Wall Street calls a "growth" stage, we can expect more of the same in the future. Many new products will come out of the research laboratories this year and they will be advertised vigorously to the medical profession. There is also talk in the industry of doing more in the way of direct advertising to the consumer. This move might be resented by the doctors, but the industry is concerned at consumer irritation with high prices of prescription medicines. This also concerns the Federal Trade Commission, which is currently investigating to discover why prices of antibiotics have not fallen. If the industry continues to grow the way it has, the day may very well come when your mailbox will be as stuffed as the doctor's.

Letter from London

(Continued from inside cover)

power into the national economy.

During the first Tory government, however, industrial relations remained satisfactory. Production was still increasing at an annual rate of roughly 5 per cent, and in his first years of office Mr. Butler—and the British economy—benefited from a major switch in the terms of trade to the tune of £600 million ($1.7 billion). Hence, although prices were rising, wages were rising too—if anything a little faster—and productivity, at least to a certain extent, kept pace with inflation. But in Butler's last budget, which took place immediately before the 1955 election campaign, and which was a vote-catching "giveaway," he undoubtedly overstepped the mark; and the result, which made itself felt in the summer of 1955, was the worst balance-of-payments crisis Britain had experienced since the war. This time the government was unable to resort to devaluation; instead, Mr. Butler, in an emergency autumn budget, and Mr. Macmillan in the 1956 budget, imposed a brutal credit squeeze which slowed down the rate of industrial expansion; indeed, in the last six months, for the first time since 1938, production actually declined.

Inevitably, in these circumstances, both government and industry found it essential to revert to the policy of wage restraint. But, having formulated financial policy during these years without consultation with the unions, the government has found it difficult to resume the old, easy relationship. The Conservative concept of the "Opportunity State" is interpreted by union leaders as the "Free-for-All State," in which only the fittest can survive; they argue that since the government has abandoned the attempt to create an overall economy policy in the interests of all sections of the nation, it must expect the unions to place their own interests first and fight for them. So long as prices continue to rise, why should the workers make the first sacrifice to stabilize them? If the government is prepared to impose dividend-restraint, and restore physical controls, well and good; but if its political philosophy prevents it from doing this—as indeed is the case—then it must expect the unions to follow *their own* philosophy.

THIS breakdown in the relationship between the government and the T.U.C. has been aggravated by a decisive change in the labor leadership. Early in 1956, Mr. Frank Cousins became general secretary of the T.G.W.U. Unlike his predecessors, such as Bevin and Deakin, Cousins is a firm Socialist who believes that the unions should play a militant role in politics. He is prepared, he says, to cooperate with the government—even a Tory government—provided it will meet him half way. During his first few months in office, he decided—to use his own words—to "put the government on trial." The results were plainly unsatisfactory, and he now feels no obligation to urge his followers to exercise wage restraint, or indeed to cooperate in any way whatsoever. When Mr. Macmillan, as chancellor, asked to be invited to the last trades-union annual congress in order to address the delegates, Mr. Cousins gave a blunt refusal. "This isn't a film festival," he said. And Cousins is not an irresponsible firebrand; he is a shrewd political operator of the first rank who knows he is merely personalizing and expressing emotions deep in the labor movement, which have been seeking an outlet for some time.

This is the background to the present crisis; but since Suez, and the departure of Sir Anthony Eden, the approaching struggle has been given a distinct political flavor. Although it has only been in office three months, the Macmillan administration is in process of decomposition. With monotonous regularity, successive by-elections have charted the steady erosion of Sir Anthony's massive majority, and according to the latest Gallop Poll, Labor now has a lead of 10.5 points—its biggest over the Conservatives since the 1945 landslide victory. Here a British government, provided it commands a parliamentary majority, can, in theory at least, remain in office until the end of its term; and the Tories' has still three years to run. But when public leadership is clearly swinging against a government, only the very firmest leadership can prevent the spread of a defeatist climate among its supporters beyond the point when the only alternative is to resign office and go to the country. So far, this leadership has been notably lacking, and the recent resignation of Lord Salisbury shows that the internal contradictions in the party, which the Suez crisis matured, are coming to a head. One more push, it seems, and the government will topple over, a general election will follow, Labor will win by a majority of over 100, and Britain will enter a prolonged period of Socialist planning. For a man with the views of Mr. Cousins, this is a very attractive prospect; and it may well be that he feels himself called upon to supply the push.

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A Matter of Rhetoric?

American Writers and British Readers

Richard Hoggart

READING Forster's *A Passage to India* here in America proved rather more disturbing to me than to my class of English majors. They had the expected difficulties, notably in coming to terms with Forster's tone; yet they remained politely receptive and intelligently patient. But I, after half a year's steeping in American emotional forms—styles of conversation and public utterance, manners of neighborhood and personal engagement—I felt for a while really alien to the book; as though I'd suddenly walked in home again from a very far shore and wasn't ready for a readjustment.

I had done just that, I suppose. Here once again was the delicately modulated and smooth-edged parochialism of one major area of English letters. In *A Passage to India* Forster is deliberately emphasizing something of all this, it is true, in the contrasts he makes between English landscapes—both physical and emotional—and those of India. Yet that wasn't exactly what was at issue. This was something to do with the whole rub and texture of the writing itself, and was noticeable even in those parts where Forster was seeking to convey the quality of Indian life. It was, first and most evidently, a matter of tone; or better perhaps, of tonal control, since the tone was decided by a certain kind of attitude towards the emotions.

The way this control operates in Forster is on the whole typical of its operation in a great many modern English novels. It indicates an important difference, I'm now inclined to think, between them and many American novels. No doubt we feel in much the same way "underneath"; but we tend to express our feelings differently, to have a different notation of the emotions. I should guess that for English readers, whether or not they consciously recognize it, this may be the most *foreign* quality in American writing.

MORE, it may well be exactly this quality which draws one group of English readers to American fiction, and often makes them more responsive to it than to much of their native fiction. I am not thinking of academics or reviewers, though many of them particularly admire American writing. Nor am I thinking of the vast submerged audience for the sex-and-violence novels and space-fiction that is brought across as ballast. Apart from these there is a considerable audience, one larger than is generally recognized at home, of people who are neither professional intellectuals nor readers of the pulp-magazines. They are "intelligent laymen"—out of the literary world in either its academic or fashionable forms and often not members of the professional classes, but good and serious readers who to a large extent go their own gait in reading. I can think offhand of three such readers who are typical of many scattered over the country. Among them, they know well the work of Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Robert Penn Warren, J. D. Salinger and Saul Bellow. It is a mixed list but not a discreditable one, even for a native American reader, I should suppose. And it is worth adding—so as to confirm that they do not read American novels to find a kind of toughness and hard-hitting that they do not usually find at home—that they are none of them particular admirers of, say, Dos Passos, or of Sinclair Lewis or of Steinbeck. Nor do they appear to be seeking toughness' inversion, that sentimentality which does attract some people to much second-rank American fiction.

I can best begin to show what I think these readers are seeking by quoting a passage which has the "foreign" quality, though in a rather over-bold form:

> And as I sat brooding there on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity behind the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Presumably most people would agree that the final paragraph of *The Great Gatsby* is inflated. But the passage has a significance beyond this. It has a kind of rhetoric (I am using the word descriptively, without pejorative implications) which marks it as American rather than English. This is not simply, or most importantly, the rhetoric of "the American dream," though certainly that does inform the writing. The passage is rhetorical in the face of its own emotions, wondering and uncautious and unprescribed. It is not as sure as Turgenev, yet it does recall something of his vibrant acceptance before the feelings. The tone is very rarely found in the English novel, particularly in this century; think, for instance, of Fitzgerald's exact contemporaries in England, "the novelists of the twenties," Huxley and Waugh. Or compare Fitzgerald's note with Angus Wil-

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son's in *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*—a nicely apt title in this context:

> Gerald Middleton was a man of mildly but persistently depressive temperament. Such men are not at their best at breakfast, nor is the week before Christmas their happiest time. Both Larwood and Mrs. Larwood had learned over the years to respect their employer's melancholy moods by remaining silent. They did so on this morning. The house in Montpelier Square was as silent as a tomb.

There is an almost over-confident coolness of tone, a thoroughly assured sense of the way syntax shall be made to denote just this kind of quality, this sort of attitude; there is a sense of closely prescribed and regulated communion between the author and his readers in their approach to the emotions and the way they will express them.

PERHAPS it will be objected that something of this can be found in certain American writers, in several nineteenth-century novelists right up to James, for example; and today, perhaps, in Mary McCarthy or in Lionel Trilling's *The Middle of the Journey*. To discuss nineteenth-century writers would carry the question wider than there is room to go here. But of contemporary writers one may say that Mary McCarthy and Lionel Trilling are not distinctively American novelists. They may embody an important element in American life, but that element possesses modified Western European modes of feeling. New York European, it might be more accurate to call these modes; but that is often a refined and intellectually self-conscious form of Europeanism, sometimes worn rather too intensely—as in the over-sharpness of Mary McCarthy, or the excessive brightness of Randall Jarrell or the occasional intellectual ponderousness of Lionel Trilling. It is not surprising that by most professional readers in England Trilling's novel—which I, too, respected—was immediately and warmly admired.

At this point I imagine that some American critics will cry that they see where I'm going and don't like it; that this is no more than a round-about expression of the old silly call for a "truly *American* literature"; that it is not so far from the brash stereotyped formulations: vast open land, extremes of climate, fluid and heterogeneous people, energy and opportunity and lustiness, the frontier as against the genteel Eastern seaboard, and so on. There may be more in all this than its opponents are usually prepared to allow, but it is not for an alien to attempt again the job of winnowing. I have, sticking to my point, to go on trying to prove it by stylistic differences, by the differences in tone which strike an Englishman, even though he may not be particularly drawn to the "lusty open land" approach.

The coolness, the lack of untidiness or strain, in the passage from Angus Wilson quoted above arises largely, I suggested, from the assumption of a very firmly established relationship between the writer, his readers and their common modes of feeling and expression. The denotations of the verbal currency for feeling are pretty exactly known. *Socially,* it is a remarkably assured writing; Jane Austin can be heard behind it.

It is, of course, the writing of a class, of the sensitive English middle-class who have for years had the luck to know their place and their value both intellectually and socially. And whatever the present changes in English social patterns—I think we shall be able to see in another generation that they have been major changes—the English novel is still largely a class-based thing. It belongs to the self-possessed and hard, the cultivated and kindly, intelligent middle-class. It is difficult for class-exceptions, that is, for anyone writing outside the class modes, not to be defiantly strident (as in the proletarian novels of the thirties) or fiercely experimental, since the establishing of a ground from which to work demands a reassessment of tonal range and so of style (and this may help to explain something of Joyce's efforts). Apart from Joyce, the only outstanding achievement among these exceptions was made by D. H. Lawrence, whose *Sons and Lovers* is still the only considerable working-class novel that we possess—one that is organic, unpolemical and unpatronizing—and who went on to explore emotional alignments and formulations which passed beyond class.

I am not suggesting that the English novel simply cuts out whole areas of emotional experience; that might be only another way of saying that we go to the American novel for "real toughness." One recalls what an English critic called the "regulated hatred" of Jane Austen or the murderous novels of Ivy Compton-Burnett, and the thought becomes foolish. We may express our emotions tightly, but in the best novelists they can have great resonance; the "regulation" is the crucial quality.

AT THE back of the class connections lie the qualities which have made that class—restraint and understatement, obliquity used as an emotional check. How often does a man "break down" (the manner in which the phrase is used is significant) and cry in an English novel? One goes to the Russians—or the Americans—for that. It is ironic, for the plea has an oddly academic ring in its contexts, that E. M. Forster should be the modern novelist who most often asks the English middle-classes to release "the tender core of the heart." Very near the beginning of his career, in *The Longest Journey,* he made Rickie tell Agnes, who was firmly meeting Gerald's death with a stiff upper-lip, that she must "mind," must mind deeply. Yet the core of the heart is not simply tender; it is terrible and tragic and splendid and grotesque and comic. But again it was Forster who noted that the English novel was rarely "prophetic"; the "prophetic" novel of Dostoevsky, of Melville, can hardly grow in such a soil. Emily Brontë was what biologists call a "sport." Dickens was something of an exception also; in part his tonal unsteadiness reflects his unsteady relation to the modes of the class for which he wrote. On one side, his emotional links were with Dostoevsky and the Melville of *Moby Dick* rather than with George Eliot. Conrad was probably the last major figure who showed a similar rift: but he was a foreigner who had inherited an al-

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together larger manner of emotional expression.

So remarkable a homogeneity of tone could only arise, presumably, in a homogeneous, well-articulated, hierarchical and traditional society. The quality is so pervasive that one can make a fair guess by ear, whatever the overt dramatic situation, that this is an English book, this is not. I tested this by picking two novels at random from the shelves. Luckily, the English book concerns a situation as dramatic as one is likely to find in the English novel today. This is the first paragraph of William Golding's new novel *Pincher Martin,* which opens on a solitary shipwrecked sailor clinging to a rock in mid-Atlantic, desperately holding on to a life as good as lost:

> He was struggling in every direction, he was the centre of the writhing and kicking knot of his own body. There was no up and no down, no light and no air. He felt his mouth open of itself and the shrieked word burst out. "Help!"
>
> When the air had gone with the shriek, water came in to fill its place.

The American novel proved to be *The Adventures of Augie March,* which opens:

> I am an American, Chicago born—Chicago, that somber city—and go at things as I have taught myself, free-style, and will make the record in my own way: first to knock, first admitted; sometimes an innocent knock, sometimes a not so innocent. But a man's character is his fate, says Heraclitus, and in the end there isn't any way to disguise the nature of the knocks by acoustical work on the door or by gloving the knuckles.

It may be felt that the necessarily more dramatic tone of such a first-person narrative weighs the issue to the side I wish (though I suspect that the American novel uses the directness of first-person narrative more than the English—from "Call Me Ishmael" onwards—and that this could be used to support my general point). But since my main concern is with tone and style, here as reinforcement is a first-person opening from England, George Orwell's *Coming Up for Air*:

> The idea really came to me the day I got my false teeth. I remember the morning well. At about a quarter to eight I'd nipped out of bed and got into the bathroom just in time to shut the kids out. It was a beastly January morning, with a dirty yellowish-grey sky. Down below, out of the little square of bathroom window, I could see the ten yards by five of grass, with a privet hedge round it and a bare patch in the

A Requiem for Hungary

I

Hope was the mistake. Not Anger but Hope
made blindmen of them. Anger knew what tank
death is, unhurried at the intersection,
its turret turned at pleasure to its choice.

"A time for living," Hope said, and the weather
sprouted a patched-up army of surprises.
They took a police station and hoisted a flag
over the lynched storm-trooper in the Square.

And then the patches ripped. Not Hope nor heroes
come in such ripless seams as tanks are stitched to
when there are tanks enough. There were enough.
The split corpse sent a steam up from the cobbles.

A time for dying came. They saw, and knew
it was their best. Better to die than hide.
Better to knock one tank out than to live.
All men come to it when they are themselves

most seen and most afire: the hour demands:
then, Hope, which is the dream of being last,
dirties the savored death, which is the act
of setting all a life in place at once.

II

Nobody calls, but imagine someone should,
as someone—maybe Cain—called out to Cain
when Cain replied: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Nobody calls. Or someone. As you like.
Not all that calls is lost. The call spins out
in echoes through the brain-caves of the man.

Whether his mother's nonsense, turned to blood,
fills him; or what the tribe's priest saw
in allegories, the man lives in fact—

the call comes questioning, and all provision
stirs him to answer as he as been taught:
"I am! His death is mine! His life is mine!"
—The answer turns midway in its own saying:
"Which brother shall I keep? Oh, questioner,
after that first bed, all the world divided."

III

Dead men, I like you better than the living
elbowing in their blocks-long queue for bread.
It is better to die for nothing than to stand
waiting for too little, the hungry hating
the hungry who wait before them; their losses snarling.

Once in that queue, it is too late to choose.
Though a man ask nothing of himself, he still
must snatch and hate. Though he go home to starve,
he still must lay his loaf upon the table,
however weeviled, for the children's prayers.

The choice went from him when he made his choice.
A week ago with death oiled in his arms,
the choice was clear as psalms. It was the day
he flung the gun down and prepared to live
locked him in place with nothing left to give.

IV

Neither pity enough nor condemnation enough
have been understood. There is a time for dying
beyond which to survive is to belittle.

Dead men, I like you better than the living
who huddle in their weakness like my own,
guilty of needing bad bread more than choices.

I like you better but I live with these.
Who knows his choices till he finds them made?
At dawn of his clear death, he thinks he knows.

At noon of his defeat, a child comes dodging
across the rubble, begging him to escape.
At midnight he is waiting in that queue,

damned, necessary, and envying you.

JOHN CIARDI

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Snow Scene

This is a snow scene on rice paper. (I
Forget the artist's name.) The feathery
Flakes are falling still, and someone
Wearing a snow-peaked coolie-hat shoulders
A snowy burden, and his old horse too

Carries a load that comes to a peak of snow.
Both move toward a village in the pines.
Whether the man who leads the horse is you,
Or whether, on immaculate rice paper
In Japan three hundred years ago

You saw it and your brush defined the scene,
You too set black on white, or reading lines
Black on white, shoulder, in an expanse
As innocent as this
A burden that grows always heavier

As you advance
With a piled whiteness, which,
When you look closer
Turns out to be the ground of the whole picture,
Nothing, the clean rice paper showing through.

E. L. Mayo

middle, that we call the back garden.

Most striking in the passage from Golding is what might be called the "sub-classical" quality of the language, the verbal abstracting. He need only string this epithet and this verb along his syntactical necklet and his readers can be trusted to do the rest. He scarcely even bothers with a metaphor.

Orwell is writing outside his own class, about a dingy lower-middle-class life; but the tightly-sure phrasing of the sentences, and the ability to imply a whole nipped-in field of social sarcasm in the simple fall of a sentence (as at the end of the extract) belong to the world of the English middle-class novelist.

By contrast, Bellow's tone suggests a much more open and fluid society and one whose emotional keyboard is broader and more flexible. He assumes he must create his own emotional pitch as he goes along, identify it and establish it with his readers.

I mentioned earlier a pair of exceptions to the characteristic English pattern from outside the class-field. There are certainly a few from within it, though I do not think they weaken my argument. Those works of Joyce Cary which come to mind are *tours de force,* extraordinary efforts to achieve a direct sineiness within the established modes; and so somewhat artificial. Graham Greene's brilliantly presented caricatures of the emotions acquire their force precisely from the understatement and obliquity of most English writing; for the understatement is intermittently inverted into a huge inflating, and the obliquity becomes a wry, dry sin-and-bitters. And the "declassed" novels of Kingsley Amis? One need only compare *Lucky Jim* or *That Uncertain Feeling* (or John Wain's two novels) with *The Adventures of Augie March* to realize that they are variants of the traditional mode, in both their manner of debunking and their sentiments.

I think all this may help to explain why English readers of the kind described at the beginning of this essay often feel more responsive to American than to English novels. The English novel usually presents itself in the tones (and the properties, often) of a group. Here one realizes once again, sharply, that when an English reader not of the cultured middle-class seeks to "become cultured" he is led to acquire a culture of a peculiarly defined kind. He is led to adopt the traditional ways of feeling of a particular social group. It is easy for such a reader—one, say, from a provincial grammar-school—to feel out of place, even though he may also admire and envy. For there is likely to be some loss, whatever the gains.

What appeals to him in American fiction, I should guess, is a more demotic tone and a more flexible emotional range. It may be true that, in general, American novelists do not have the stylistic "finish" of, say, Sansom, Newby, Snow or Hartley. By contrast, many American novels are coarse-grained; and some are not demotic but "democratic" in tone, and that is a poorer thing altogether. But if these are the dangers of venturesome American rhetoric, those of English sensibility are forms of well-bred debilitation.

The Moral American

THE AMERICAN CONSCIENCE. By Roger Burlingame. Alfred A. Knopf. 420 pp. $6.75.

Maxwell Geismar

MR. BURLINGAME'S good book comes at the right time. It is a survey of our moral behavior from the Plymouth Colony to the Great Depression; and one only wishes he had carried on this chronicle a little farther. What would he say now? Where is the American conscience today? The witch trials of the late 17th century in New England were the last desperate attempt of the Calvinist clergy to maintain the "covenant." These persecutions were followed by a wave of public remorse and spiritual reform.

We have had our modern parallels. But what covenant are we maintaining, is the question—while the spectre of "Atheistic Communism" still looms as large, as unholy and as hysterical in the national consciousness as did the histrionic epilepsy of Cotton Mather's adolescent maiden in the devil-haunted psyche of Boston and Salem. Our own purges of guilt by association—mainly

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with the bad, dead past of the New Deal epoch—have been followed not by remorse so much as apathy and inertia. If the nation does indeed face a crisis of survival; if the major areas of the world are in the throes of revolutionary social change, the American conscience today is paralyzed by its semblance of good fortune, outwardly, and by a consuming inner anxiety.

Such at least are the more sombre reflections provoked by Mr. Burlingame's history of our moral triumphs and disasters; and yet his chronicle also affords a vista of hope—or the consoling perspective of ancient follies. It is a popular history, plainly presented, lacking a certain level of depth analysis perhaps, or modern "sophistication" of historical interpretation. It takes no account, so we are told, of the fads and vogues that are continually passing through "the shadows of the academy." The central point of view is rational, sensible, sympathetic to human rights, "optimistic" in the old-fashioned democratic tradition—and it is a relief and a pleasure to meet this again amidst all our present modes of neo-religious and neo-mystical thought.

The tone of the narrative lies about half-way between the professional debunkers of our history and the patriotic purists. Mr. Burlingame has reservations, for example, about Tawney's thesis of the protestant ethics and the rise of capitalism; and yet he traces very clearly the influence of the first tobacco plantations on Southern religion. The Church of England had a hard time with the new southern gentry. So, too, in the "Great Awakening" of the 1740s—and the camp-fire revivals of the Western frontier with their throbbing and shaking "converts"—Mr. Burlingame plays down the obvious sexual element; just as in general he prefers the nobility of the Deist conception of man to the Calvinist stress on sin, and the Methodist path of redemption.

THE great state documents of the young Republic, whatever their human and economic origins, *did* present a lofty vision of man's fate in the new world, and their influence enlightens us today. But along the way, with a quiet irony, the narrative also shows the seamy side of our noblest moral illusions; and perhaps this is the real flavor and spice of the book. The Bible State of New England grew rich on the rum trade and the slave trade even while it was debating whether "God casts the line of Election in the loins of godly parents." There is another fine section in the book which traces the true history of Old New York. From the start, the Dutch and English merchants, whose greed operated under well-oiled official protection, and cared neither for religious nor civic values, created the Nineveh-on-Hudson.

"Throughout the American story when the public conscience has been confused, conscienceless men have had their most fruitful seasons." This is Mr. Burlingame's quiet verdict on the revolutionary epoch which set the stage for our subsequent moral battles. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 evolved from another period of "greed, jealousy, political chicanery, and lawlessness." Hardly was the nation created when there came the first of the land-grant scandals which marked the opening of the Western frontier. Some of our Washington lobbyists, staking their claims in what is left of the public domain, could learn a few tricks from the enterprising and precocious Connecticut minister, Manasseh Cutler, and his Ohio company.

The immense wealth of the American continent was the devil's trap for the American conscience. Despite Mr. Burlingame's faith, there are moments, sometimes years, in the national chron-

Vox Humana

Being without quality
I appear to you at first
as an unkempt smudge, a blur,
an indefinite haze, merely pricking the eyes, almost
nothing. Yet you perceive me.

I have been always most close
when you had least resistance,
falling asleep, or in bars;
during the unscheduled hours,
though strangely without substance,
I hang, there and ominous.

Aha, sooner or later
you will have to name me, and,
as you name, I shall focus,
I shall become more precise.
O Master (for you command
in naming me, you prefer)!

I was, for Alexander,
the certain victory; I
was hemlock for Socrates;
and, in the dry night, Brutus
waking before Philippi
stopped me, crying out 'Caesar!'

Or if you call me the blur
that in fact I am, you shall
yourself remain blurred, hanging
like smoke indoors. For you bring,
to what you define now, all
there is, ever, of future.

THOM GUNN

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icle when we wonder if Calvin's low view of man wasn't the only true view. If to be human means only to be sinful, then perhaps even our extraordinary cultural proscriptions on sexual pleasure can be viewed as a sort of national penance for the manifold delights of avarice. Yet the present narrative also stresses the story of Roger Williams, of the Quaker martyr Anne Hutchinson, of Washington, Franklin and Jefferson, of the Dutch and German pietists who followed William Penn, of the great, crucial and agonizing anti-slavery struggle.

IN THE Mexican War and the conquest of Texas, the New England writers articulated the true voice of the national conscience. (Although, in another fine section of the book, it was also the enraged and apoplectic "mercantile conscience" of New England which advocated secession from the union during the Jeffersonian Embargo Acts.) And in the grand sell-out of the Robber Baron period which marked the true close of the Bible State in our history, and the beginning of a new American empire, pagan and materialistic rather than religious and ethical, there were still the "wild men," the fanatics and visionaries of the populist and agrarian causes. Indeed it was the "atheists," the "radicals," and the immigrant dreamers of social justice in the late 19th century, who mainly inherited and preserved our true cultural heritage.

The old ancestral line of the Republic —a Henry Adams, a Henry James, an Edith Wharton—retreated from the vulgar and violent spectacle of American life near the turn of the century. But such an old-fashioned native American writer as William Dean Howells (to add a literary superstructure to Mr. Burlingame's moral chronicle) joined the radical currents of social protest, where Walt Whitman had preceded him, and where Theodore Dreiser would follow him. Through such figures as these, the Progressive movement of the 1900s can be traced back to the Transcendentalists and forward to the New Deal itself—and it is just this central modern tradition of American conscience and belief that has been almost blacked out of the national consciousness in our generation.

In another odd historical situation our intellectuals have somehow combined with the advertising sloganeers and the chambers of commerce to disparage or deny the peculiarly American social, moral and artistic achievements of the 20th century. But as *The American Conscience* also shows, much the same reversionary trend occurred in our country during the crisis of the French revolution. The ill-starred course of the Russian revolution in our own day, the spectre of the police state with all its cruelty and tyranny, accounts for the present paralysis of liberal American thought. The virtue of Mr. Burlingame's book is that it affords us this perspective, among others; while this latest historian of our moral fibre also reminds us of our deepest native heritage.

Perhaps, as was said during the depression years, things aren't as bad as they seem today—they couldn't be.

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The Age of Coolidge

DAYS OF THE PHOENIX. The Nineteen-Twenties I Remember. By Van Wyck Brooks. E. P. Dutton. 193 pp. $3.95.

Jacob Korg

VAN WYCK BROOKS' pleasantly ruminative memoir has enough of a period quality to give the present-day reader a keener sense of his own time and identity. It is a little startling to realize that the twenties are so far off. In those remote days Romain Rolland was regarded as a great world spiritual leader and F. Scott Fitzgerald's prank of calling the Westport fire department to a party to announce that his guests, rather than his house, were "lit" was not thought too topheavy to be funny. Were the enthusiasms and appetites of the twenties really so flimsy? Or is it that we of the fifties are living in an age dominated by the skeptic and the sourpuss? The fifties may not be the best point of vantage for examining the twenties, but if we try to identify the qualities that make the people and events Mr. Brooks describes characteristic of their moment, we are struck, from where we stand, by a self-consciousness, innocence and optimism that seem to belong to another age rather than to another decade.

Destiny was not something to be accepted, but to be strenuously sought. Writers and artists ransacked the world from Paris to Polynesia in their search for roots, and when they came home to America they returned to it as a Cause rather than a place to live. An earlier generation's pilgrimage to Europe had produced such results as the preservation of Robert Browning's gondola in a Long Island garden. The generation of the twenties was wise enough to see that Europe could never be transplanted to America, but still romantic enough to seek rapport with tradition in the old farmhouses and colonial antiquities of Connecticut. The artists made much of their relation to society, for they felt that if the artist was not a prophet he could be no more than a dilettante. There were many, like Paul Rosenfeld, who thought of the arts as a sacred calling, and some of these were Westport grocers who refused to send bills to Brooks because he was a writer.

THE FEELING was abroad that strength arose from a close relationship with fundamentals. Brooks gives a charming portrait of his father-in-law, J. W. Stimson, a painter who found the life of the Burgundian peasantry as crude and bracing as a small red wine. Brooks reflects that Stimson would have found better acceptance in the twenties, as did his son, J. F. Stimson, who spent most of his life in Poly-

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nesia. Taking Lafcadio Hearn as his model, Stimson immersed himself in the primitive life of the islands, learning Tahitian, recording the religious lore of vanishing tribes, and taking part in fire-walking ceremonies. In Brooks' sketch of J. F. Stimson one detects a thirst, typical in the twenties, to escape from whatever identity the American environment conferred on its sons.

This tendency to adopt the loyalties of others was a variation of the cultural nationalism that Brooks, Constance Rourke, Waldo Frank and others felt to be an expression of the most vital truths about art. It was a time when cultural nationalism could be a fruitful, rather than a provincializing force. The twenties was the earliest period when "American" ceased to be a term of reproach in artistic and cultural matters. Brooks' interest in the national quality of American writers was a logical result of his critical philosophy. He believed that art drew its greatness from its content rather than its form, and that it must stay close to the nourishment of its own soil if it was to speak clearly to society and retain its moral power. The quality he most admired was a certain bardic grandeur that transcended faults of style and form, such as could be found in Whitman or Dostoevsky. These views led Brooks to a conflict in criticism and a great personal disaster, for it was the rival school of criticism that dominated the thirties and forties. Joyce, Pound, Eliot and Gertrude Stein had also been parts of the post-war atmosphere, and their concept of art as something independent of a particular society and distinguished by formal values gained the ascendancy, through what came to be called the New Criticism, in the academies, the reviews and advanced literary thought generally.

BROOKS had strong suport from such nineteenth-century writers as Ibsen and Dostoevsky for his views, and he felt that they explained the deterioration of such expatriates as James. But it was the question of James that led Brooks to the crisis. He was convinced that the later novels of James embraced a sterile formalism and were divorced from life, and he was deeply troubled by the fact that these intricate novels and their mandarin style were so much admired. He felt that his whole critical position and his life's work were threatened. His indecision on the James issue, like the leak in the dike, caused a general catastrophe, for it led, together with some other factors, to a breakdown whose terrible suicidal impulses Brooks describes in the last pages of his book. The handful of flash-like memories of violently disturbed fellow-patients he recalls from his days in various sanatoria forms an unsettling contrast with the general calm and warmth of his other reflections. Brooks emerged from his illness to a critical orientation that was essentially unchanged. *Days of the Phoenix* is a visit to the times when that orientation was new and exciting, and to people like Randolph Bourne, Bliss Carman, Hendrik Willem Van Loon and Constance Rourke, who believed, as Brooks still does, that it was the purpose of art, not merely to "represent," but to "elevate."

The Need to Risk Tragedy

SHAKESPEARE AND THE NATURAL CONDITION. By Geoffrey Bush. Harvard University Press. 135 pp. $3.

THE MODERN TEMPER. By Joseph Wood Krutch. Harvest Books. Harcourt, Brace. 169 pp. $1.15.

THE SPIRIT OF TRAGEDY. By Herbert J. Muller. Alfred A. Knopf. 335 pp. $5.

TRAGEDY: A View of Life. By Henry Alonzo Myers. Cornell University Press. 210 pp. $3.50.

THE OUTSIDER. By Colin Wilson. Houghton Mifflin Co. 228 pp. $4.

R. J. Kaufmann

THE BOOKS listed above are typical of those now being written on the theme of tragedy. Together they well represent the huge reorientation of literary energies that is currently taking place—a clear and necessary shift from concern with craft, with technique, with the artist's plight, indeed a shift from the whole New Critical preoccupation with literature as a specialized, metasocial, verbal activity, most interesting where it can be showed to be least accessible to the judgments and standards employed in "life." It can best be called, provisionally, *synoptic* criticism since it aims to see much *at a glance*, to discern underlying likeness, to make an inventory of our usable intellectual holdings.

The reissue of Joseph Wood Krutch's celebrated book-length essay, *The Modern Temper*, after twenty-seven years, helps to sharpen the enquiry. In fact its title might be stolen to describe the central function of this panoramic criticism, for it is concerned with what men are, with how they think of themselves, with the spirit of the times. The criticism seems to assume that life is less readily differentiated than we used to think. It crosses boundaries. Sociologists and psychologists are writing about literature; the best literary critics are writing about Freud, about society, about love, about virtue, about religious origins, about history, about the public issues of our times—the Rosenbergs, Oppenheimer, Hiss and the other semi-fictional narratives serialized in the public press—in fact about nearly everything but novels and poems. Like it or not, modern literary men

R. J. KAUFMANN teaches Elizabethan and Modern literature at the University of Rochester and is writing a book on Tragic Tone.

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are ruminatively concerned about Life, about Meaning. They are thinking. What they are thinking and how their activity transcends mere fad is the too-ambitious subject of my reflections on these representative books on the ways of tragedy.

READING *The Modern Temper* again across the historical gap of a generation of death and cataclysm is, strangely, a not very disquieting experience. The book is an unremittingly honest attempt to set forth just how man's sustaining illusions have been killed off by science. Krutch plays variations on themes since made too familiar by their facile rehearsal in every quarter: the degeneration of love into a mere biological urge; the modern impossibility of tragedy, since we cannot take man's dignity seriously when we know his foolishly incidental role in the universe. The book is filled with nostalgia for nobility, for innocence, for the lost vigor of that fine age when unintimidated men could think great thoughts and yet feel at home in the universe. He is surprisingly responsive to exactly those romantic fictions which he imagines are altogether lost to us. Above all, and it is the most active emotion in the book, he cannot throw off his ironic recognition of the gay spirit in which the terrible devastation of human dignity and self-esteem was carried forward: "all the bases upon which modern despair rests were laid joyously by people who were quite sure they were serving humanity." He seems certain that "to understand any of the illusions upon which the values of life depend inevitably destroys them; but we realize the fact too late." Thinking these things, he hates his own

Bell Buoy

So we set signs over the world to say
To ourselves, returning, that we know the place,
Marking the sea too with shaped tokens
Of our usage, which even while they serve us
Make one with the unmeasured mist, sea-slap,
Green rock awash with the gray heave just
Out of sight, wet air saturated with sounds
But no breath—and in no time they are seen
To be in league with the world's remoteness
Whose features we grope for through fog and can never
Seize to our satisfaction. First the sound
Comes, and again, from the caged bell lost in the gray
Out ahead. Then into the glasses,
And gone, and again sighted, staying:
A black shape like nothing, rounded, rocking like
A chair, with a gull on top. Clearer
The dreaming bronze clangs over the lifting
Swell, through the fog-drift, clangs, not
On the sea-stroke but on the fifth second clangs,
Recalling something, out of some absence
We cannot fathom, with itself communing.
Was it we who made this, or the sea's necessity?
You can hear the wash on its rolling plates
Over your own wake, as you come near
And confirm: black can, odd number crusted
Already with gull crap over the new paint,
Green beard and rust speckling its undersides
As you see when it rolls. Nothing you can
Say as you pass, though there are only you two
And you come so close and seem to share
So much. And it will twist and stare after you
Through the closing fog, clanging. It is
A dead thing but we have agreed upon it: kept
To port, entering, starboard departing, as
May your fortune be, it can assure you
Of where you are, though it knows nothing
Of where you are going or may have been.

W. S. MERWIN

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thoughtfulness and sees awareness as a biological vice and civilization as the inevitable external symptom of decadence. In a courageous way he accepts what seems to him the terminal logic of his position: "we will cling to our own lost cause, choosing always rather to know than to be. . . . There is not place for us in the natural universe, but we are not, for all that, sorry to be human."

If one accepts his main allegations about man's lonely irrelevance to the scheme of things, these curtain lines have the very tragic force he denies is possible in modern life. But his systematic pessimism has a kind of extravagant eagerness for the last word which seems neither reliable as philosophical assertion nor hard-headed enough to underpin the literature we have still to write. Krutch's book is admirable and I think historically necessary because it does state with urgent clarity the grounds for human alienation that I argue the present literary generation is trying to relieve—no longer by denying them but by asserting that reconciliation will be on nature's terms and that these terms are the same that they have always been: tragically severe and potentially dignified.

TWO books by very young writers, one English and one American, are exhibits in this suit for reconciliation. One of them, Colin Wilson's *The Outsider,* has already achieved a certain notoriety. It is a book at once animated and disfigured by what Isaiah Berlin called in another context the young intellectual's "half-baked infatuation with general ideas." Wilson uses literature in the *synoptic* manner as a set of clues, as a series of expressive testaments to the way life has seemed to some of its most impassioned observers. He draws alike from the poets (Blake and Eliot), the more literary philosophers (Nietzsche, Sartre, William James), the novelists (Hesse, Camus, Hemingway, Tolstoy), and from the sages, too (Ramakrishna, Berdyev, Gurdieff). At first glance his range of reference seems immense, but with few exceptions his acquaintance is casual, doctrinaire or predatory. His interest embraces only one area.

Since he accepts as a valid presupposition the cheerless, inhospitable and valueless world that Krutch describes in *The Modern Temper,* he is interested only in how this malady, this sense of outsideness, of spiritual exile, can be relieved. Although the book is not always rigorous or clear, its most urgently-placed question is easy to state: if a man is too perceptive to accept the sham values of a middle-class culture which is yet too firmly entrenched in him to be dislodged, if in short he is neither free from desire nor in the presence of anything that seems desirable, what then is worth doing? Wilson's answer, of course, is religion. After his vast and earnest enquiry, this simple solution might put us off his pretentious book altogether if his nostrum of religion were not manifestly inadequate for many of the questions raised. One feels that these eleventh hour pieties help him to break off an argument which his dialectical skills cannot resolve. Certainly his concluding remarks suggest that he has had intimations of something more in accord with the facts than his resort to Gurdieff would suggest. He says, "the problem of the individual will always be . . . the conscious striving *not* to limit the amount of experience seen and touched; the intolerable struggle to expose the sensitive areas of being to what may possibly hurt them; the attempt to see as a whole."

The other young man's book, *Shakespeare and the Natural Condition* by Geoffrey Bush, may surprise those who have read his impeccable and modish stories in *The New Yorker.* Despite a nervous recourse to portentous phrases, to rather artful and pointless, airy turns, Mr. Bush has a great deal to say. He offers a fresh reading of the little-appreciated *All's Well that Ends Well* and some clean insights into the evolution of Shakespeare's dramatic thought, but this book is most important as a study of the tragic worlds of *Hamlet* and *King Lear.* The chapter, "Tragedy and Natural Fact," in which Bush interprets them is a fine example of the kind of *synoptic* criticism I have

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alluded to. He resists with unobstrusive precision the current academic alternatives either to discover the meaning of the plays in Christian dogma or to strip them of tragedy by meaningless claims as to the alleged heroic triumphs of the individual will with which they end. It is between these two modes of relief that tragedy takes place. Let me quote him on *Hamlet*: "To commit oneself to time and the world is an act of rashness . . . is to take the risk of playing one's own part in the world. Yet the need to share in the common natural history of life and death overcomes this consciousness that to act is to take a step into the dark and assume a position without grounds. . . . To share in the incompleteness of things is to find oneself made complete." This, I should say, is the tragic affirmation. It assumes no triumphs, asks nothing beyond the human, in fact acknowledges the regular incidence of defeat, but it answers well enough the Krutchian-Wilsonian question as to what is worth doing.

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The remaining two books are works by academic humanists of the most admirable kind. The first, by the late Henry Alonzo Myers, *Tragedy: A View of Life,* is a set of essays written on the way toward a book by a man whose earnest, unself-sparing endeavor was to make justice, freedom and intellectual charity prevail. Myers provides an interesting interpretation of tragedy as a complex way of understanding life that reaches beyond the too rigid categories of optimism and pessimism. For the rest, his just indictment of Aristotle for a failure to perceive the philosophical force of tragedy is one of the most telling critiques of the *Poetics.*

THE LAST book is Herbert Muller's splendid *The Spirit of Tragedy,* which is the sort of book that readers of his *The Uses of the Past* would expect. Sustained by the steady, unobstrusive pressure of a high intelligence, it offers an even-handed history of the mind's experiences from Aeschylus to Eliot, with solid critical discussions of authors as various as Racine, Marlowe, Wagner and Euripides. It is critically deepened by long, central considerations of Shakespeare and Sophocles. Everywhere it is distinguished by a fine sense of scene and of historical environment which nowhere proves more trustworthy than in its discussion of Chekhov. For me that chapter is the best in the book, both for its intrinsic discernment and wise sense of human shadings and because so many other critics crush, overexplain or patronize as quaint Chekhov's gently humane but unmistakably tragic style. Indeed, Muller's book has so many good things in it that one is tempted to trot them out *seriatum.* Instead, I should like to use his important book as an occasion for some concluding generalizations about the critical position I have been sketching.

Muller is, I infer, a humanist and, I infer further, a liberal in the best meaning of the term—a meaning we are in danger of losing in literary criticism which is riddled with the consequences of political reaction. His book is not just a disquisition on tragedy but a contribution to our sense of human possibility that is precisely in the orbit of what I have called synoptic criticism. I say this because it seems to me that our generation cannot safely shirk its historical duty to salvage what is good in the currently discredited liberal humanist tradition. We must do this without further recourse to self-recriminations for not being wiser than we were, without facile variations on how destructive the seedy anonymity of twentieth century urban existence is to human dignity and responsible individuality. We know that liberalism erred through premature optimism and excessive trust in human rationality and that it was subverted by the notion that it had been appointed to issue in the millenium.

Liberalism was not so much defective in its aims as it was guilty, in its over-intent altruism, of a huge but not irremediable oversight. In its desire to improve the human condition, it prided itself so much on its new descriptive grasp of that *condition* and on its willing ability to *improve* it that the key word, *human,* got left to one side and with it the necessary recollection of all the cruel limitations, the unconstructive loyalties, the spiritual allergies, the ornery, unscientific irrelevancies of mood and choice which make man what he is and which create the tensions for tragedy. Fine as it was in its great moments, the liberal imagination lacked the tragic sense of life. It mistakenly saw its goal as the annihilation of EVIL and sought to win secular sainthood by a kind of linear progression of rewarding effort. Muller and people like him assert a more sombre, less superficially gratifying canon of value but surely one more productive of human dignity. Their program calls for the costly, heart-rending attempt to keep the possibilities open, to purge the *psyche* and the *polis* alike of corrosive *evils* not EVIL.

THE NEW liberalism has been matured by a recognition of the tragic threat to even the most civilized life. The liberal's traditional regard for human dignity and freedom is intensified by the realization that we can no longer assume their survival.

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Dreiser: The Press of Life

R. W. Flint

F. O. MATTHIESSEN, during his last year, was writing his book on Dreiser, and the critical reaction to that excellent book was colored by a dozen distorting passions and feelings. Only Saul Bellow and John Berryman, of the critics I read, did it anything like justice. But Matthiessen had not written either an introduction nor a satisfactory conclusion to his book and had not really developed the implications in his dual allegiance to T. S. Eliot and Dreiser, the man of consummate intellectual refinement and the man of great intellectual powers but no sophistication whatsoever. Writing on Dreiser at all, for a man in Matthiessen's position, must have been an enormous effort of will. I think he foreshadowed more than he foresaw, namely, that Dreiser and Eliot are the two poles between which American sensibility will have to oscillate in the immediate future; Dreiser with his lyric compassion, his immense sweep of sympathy and sense of detail, his splendid inconsistencies, his passionate dramatization of the Horatio Alger ideal of Success in all its possibilities and limitations; Eliot with complementary qualities I don't need to enumerate here.

My main excuse for this article, however, is the hope of seeing a reprint of one of Dreiser's best and least-known works, *Twelve Men,* published in 1919 just after the fuss over the suppression of *The Genius* and the writing of his unsuccessful play, *The Hand of the Potter,* and before *Hey-Rub-A-Dub-Dub,* a set of philosophical essays not calculated to flatter the reigning critics. *An American Tragedy* was five years in the future and Dreiser's reputation had entered deep waters. *Twelve Men* is not only a very good book, it is essential to any understanding of his range; rapid and sure in its narrative line, written in a style as transparent, though not as controlled or allusive, as Joyce's in *Dubliners.* It also reveals a fine sense of humor, released, as it were, from the heavier burdens of his tragic view of life. Matthiessen rightly says that it "constitute[s] some of his most essential biography" and also "possess[es]" his finest and most massive objectivity, as he presents the men for themselves, not just in relation to himself." Readable, revealing and moving, it ought to establish Dreiser's title as, if I may be forgiven the analogy, the Michelangelo of American journalism.

But more of this book later. If an Eliot-Dreiser parallel is a little far-fetched for a short essay, a comparison of the reputations of Dreiser and D. H. Lawrence may yield better results. Neither has lacked enthusiastic support in the past, but it has never seemed on top of its subject, always fragmentary, not to say contradictory and merely baffling. People tend at first to read great novelists the way they read newspapers and magazines, in fits and starts, for "scenes" and "characters." Or they grudgingly admit Dreiser's "bulk," as if it were an awful lot of the same thing and impressive only by repetition. But with Matthiessen's book and Leavis' *D. H. Lawrence, Novelist,* we finally begin to see what they have in common and why it has taken so long to discover it. When Matthiessen notes Dreiser's "groping after words corresponding to a groping of the thought, but with both thought and words borne along on the diapason of a deep emotion," a "deep grounding, at its best, in the rhythm of his emotions," we begin to see where we are, though Matthiessen doesn't perhaps sufficiently account for Dreiser's detachment. And that "groping" makes me uneasy; it suggests that Dreiser didn't know a cliché when he saw one, and I'm sure he did, but didn't need to care.

LEAVIS' book is as violent as Matthiessen's is tentative—a real broth of a book that tries to establish Lawrence as "incomparably the greatest creative writer in English of his time," let the chips fall where they may. He has seen the difficulties of supporting men like Lawrence and Dreiser better than Matthiessen, but instead of being inaudible he blows our heads off. *The Spectator,* nevertheless, has hailed it as one of the two books of English academic criticism in the last twenty years "that could be called great." How, to be sure, is one to use the vocabulary of genteel literary criticism on these intransigent novelists without patronizing them? Dreiser and Lawrence were essentially eupeptic, high-spirited men, sustained by a humor and self-confidence that defies patronage.

Dreiser's general ideas at his best are perfectly adequate to their uses, clumsy, repetitive and even tedious as they may sometimes be by absolute Greek standards; but he never closed the gap between world and idea to anywhere near the extent that Lawrence did, nor did he have anything like Lawrence's social range. On the other hand, like Jane Austen, he worked within a world that took itself immensely for granted, that was not besieged, like Lawrence's, by fifty differing versions of the good life pressing on it from abroad, all of which had to be openly or tacitly defied. Dreiser had two important assets too rarely acknowledged: he knew exactly what he stood for—" . . . middle-class romance, middle-class humor, middle-class tenderness and middle-class grossness . . ."—as he admiringly describes his favorite brother Paul; and he was sufficiently sustained by these things to treat the "upper" classes in the same romantic, curious, open spirit as he treated his own. Of the patrician worlds of the Adamses and Edith Wharton he knew and saw absolutely nothing. Neither nostalgia nor bitterness troubled him on their account. Dreiser's upper classes were the new provincial rich, some of whom he knew quite well and saw, despite the enveloping romance, with a perfectly cool eye. This world may seem a far cry indeed from Lawrence's Brangwens and Criches; but the point to be made is that both novelists were blessed with a great capacity

R. W. FLINT was the Partisan Review fellow in criticism for 1956.

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for lyric response and amused, affectionate, critical intelligence towards the worlds they knew. Both had an extraordinary genius for isolating the emotional essence of their people, and also for making the grand gestures of defiance and rejection without which great fiction is impossible.

Ford Madox Ford thought *Jennie Gerhardt* a failure, and Mencken thought that, compared with *Sister Carrie* ("no more than a first sketch," "chiefly representation") the book was "suave, persuasive, well-ordered, solid in structure, instinct with life." He also finds Cowperwood of *The Titan* "a blend of revolutionist and voluptuary, a highly civilized Lorenzo the Magnificent" and Cowperwood of *The Financier* "little more than an extra-pertinacious money-grubber," the book itself a relative failure. That I would agree with Ford and stand Mencken's judgments on their head shows, I think, how Dreiser's true form has revealed itself with time, and has nothing to do with our relative sympathy for the characters or any conventional suavity of construction, but a great deal to do with the intensity of the process and the "representation" resulting from it. *Jennie Gerhardt* does not compare with *Sister Carrie* either in the range of its emotional curve or the wonderful vividness of its scenes. It is merely a more plausible novel in the manner of Hardy. Similarly, in *The Financier,* emotional pressure corresponds to the greater intellectual effort Dreiser made in that book than in *The Titan.* In greatly preferring *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* to the more conventional *Sons and Lovers,* Leavis shows how, in the kind of "organic" plotting for which Dreiser and Lawrence deserve to be famous, intuition and intelligence work together to supersede the type of novel in which action flows more directly from character, and character is more opaque and compact. Lawrence's best plots, according to Leavis, are a kind of polyphonic confrontation of certain "qualities of life," fully evident only to people who grasp Lawrence's whole view of life. Dreiser uses such conventional devices as the trial, often quite ineptly, for terminal suspense; but the common refusal to grant him tragic status comes from a failure to see the *emotional* unity of his plots.

CONTRAST *Sister Carrie* with Faulkner's *Light in August.* The Faulkner looks like a tragedy the way almost any Rouault or El Greco looks "religious" for various technical and sentimental reasons. Joe Christmas, the central figure, is a Dreiserian hero in his large capacity for suffering, but very un-Dreiserian in his role. The emotions of Carrie and Hurstwood propel and shape their book, leaving everyone and everything else bobbing forgotten behind. Christmas' "theatre," however, is single and always in view; the novel's action and characters converge; situation determines form. *Light in August* is "tragedy" only by a nearly complete inversion of the classical ideal of heroic character; still, it *looks* more like it than *Sister Carrie.* Actually, the point is fairly academic. If you are going to talk of tragedy in modern fiction, you have to substitute some generalized image of character, some cluster of values put to the test, for the Classical and Renaissance ideals of individual heroism. *Sister Carrie* certainly has the "tragic" feel, the "tragic" resonance, yet Carrie Meeber herself has many scruples but almost no character.

The same is true of Hurstwood. One critic calls Dreiser "The Man of Ice," on the theory that he lacked the moral delicacy to know that Carrie was really a cold fish. This is absurd. Until they pool their fates, Carrie and Hurstwood are borne along on the emotions that create and sustain the worlds they move in. Hence the wonderful congruence of action and atmosphere in Dreiser's writings.

Lawrence's plots are more complexly woven, more "contrapuntal," than Dreiser's, but their departure from convention is the same, and results in the same apparent implausibilities, the same ellipses, the same scanting of "character" for the sake of emotional power. When Lawrence abandoned the Hardy-like scheme of *Sons and Lovers* and Dreiser eschewed the gentilities of the reigning school of Howells, they both tapped a resource they were uniquely equipped to handle—emotional form—imprecise as the phrase may seem if you are not sympathetic. The *Bildungsroman* is thereby recreated, but only within the emotional resources of the novel's characters, not, like *Wilhelm Meister, Middlemarch, Nostromo* or *Ulysses* an attempted picture of a whole society, or if so, only by grace of the reader's indulgence. Whether or not a novelist can again do *literal* justice to a whole society is extremely doubtful. And that this form is as liable to corruption as any other, about half of Dreiser's and Lawrence's work can testify. But Dreiser's success made him *the* great American novelist of his time and place (no competition with James implied), the one in whom we feel the most sustaining and exhilarating press of life.

TWELVE MEN, to return, shows that Dreiser had a very admirable sense of conventional character. It is a set of miscellaneous biographies whose central thread is Dreiser's interest in the pathos of heroism. These men are all much larger and more visible than Carrie or Jennie or Clyde, and more winning than Hurstwood or Cowperwood. They are, to be brief, the people he knew who were more suitable for sketches than for novels. We have no comparable set of *caractères* in the ambitious Plutarchian style in American literature, except for some of the incidental portraiture in

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Henry Adams and Henry James, Santayana's *Character and Opinion in the United States,* and Howells' *My Mark Twain.* A reviewer in this magazine wrote of the book, after the customary reservations about style: "And yet, somehow, his substance does reach and impress and profoundly move us." It does indeed. Dreiser is far more than the amused bystander. He is a man from "Missouri" who has to be shown. His first reaction to his people is often one of hostility. When "De Maupassant, Junior" burst into his N.Y. editorial office "like a fighting sledge-dog," Dreiser minced no words: "'Dear dear!' I said, laughing at the slap. 'What a bravo we are! Really, you're interesting . . .'" And so one of Dreiser's inimitable middle-class tragedies begins. By the time he has finished with his assorted crew of newspaper geniuses, physical culture experts, contractor's foremen, doctors, songwriters and religious fanatics, he has penetrated all their defensive childishnesses, absurdities and professional nobilities and drawn a portrait at once delicate and monumental. His "tragic" emotion is anything but factitious. When he ventures an elegiac paragraph at the end, we feel it is well earned:

> My feeling at the time was as if I had been looking at a beautiful lamp, lighted, warm and irradiating a charming scene, and then suddenly that it had been puffed out before my eyes, as if a hundred bubbles of iridescent hues had been shattered by a breath. We toil so much, we dream so richly, we hasten so fast, and lo! the green door is opened. We are through it, and its grassy surface has sealed us forever from all which apparently we so much crave—even as, breathlessly, we are still running.

This is the right way to end the book, memorable as it is for the moving conjunction of the hard, running, restless ambition of his subjects with the genius of a true poet of life.

Gertrude Stein

GERTRUDE STEIN: Her Life and Work. By Elizabeth Sprigge. Harper and Brothers. 277 pp. $5.

Donald Sutherland

SOMEWHAT unwarily Gertrude Stein remarked in 1946 that she had always wanted to be historical. Elizabeth Sprigge, proceeding as unwarily to treat Gertrude Stein's life and writing as historical fact, has touched off a loud, reverberating series of imprecations, especially in England, upon Gertrude Stein as an historical fact and figure.

Some of this indignation has sideswiped the biography itself, which is not so unskilled as it is cracked up to be. It is, as intended, a quite objective account, therefore limited, though I look on anyone who can be objective about this subject as almost supernatural. Miss Sprigge has gathered together, with admittedly a little misinformation, a great deal of information worth having, much of it delightful, much of it new to me at least, though most of it is already known to veteran readers of Stein. I think almost all of it is made interesting to those who are not familiar with the subject, and some of it which looks like waste fact may turn out to be historically valuable. Miss Sprigge takes on the angelic function of recording, without analyzing or judging, even in the case of her own impressions, and this is quite respectable historiography. One might want a more continuous imagination of the inward scale and force of the life lived, and less circumstantial chatter, but why require of Miss Sprigge what one does not require of Suetonius?

But the tone of the reviewers, beginning at the top with Cyril Connolly in the London *Sunday Times,* has transcended the long tradition of the snide or pettish approach to Gertrude Stein and reached vituperation. I think the occasion for this sudden rise is that Miss Sprigge, has, in historicizing Gertrude Stein, in placing the life in its period and not in the larger and more permanent world of literary forms where it was far more intensely lived, put her within reach of the sort of mind which is more than equal to mere fact and the "daily life" but shy of art and ideas which are not accessories to the daily life. Any reasonably cultivated or informed person now feels within his competence in judging Gertrude Stein. Well, she asked for it, and she might even have enjoyed this.

I DO not, though the violence, for a change, is rather exhilarating, and it may be as well if her work becomes disreputable again. If I were English I imagine I should just now retire even more severely to the comforts of

DONALD SUTHERLAND is the author of Gertrude Stein, A Biography of Her Work.

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my familiar traditions and declare myself absolutely not at home to a literature given to larger and wilder intellectual adventures than my drawing-room can accommodate. I might even get into a semi-religious bind of cultural rectitude about it and try, like the reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement*, to exorcise the "demon of progress" and be scarcely willing to "forgive" T. S. Eliot and others who have gone so far as to see something in Gertrude Stein, even should they retract." I could never equal the suavity of T. S. Eliot who said her work was "very fine but not for us."

But I am not English and have no business worrying about the English—a volatile people whose spells of insularity pass as abruptly as they come. America is in far more danger—in a period when literature is tending to narrow into "maturity," neo-gentility, or gracious intellectual living, when not into the mere raw uninflected yawp—of excluding from its view of literary potentials and dimensions the exaltations and cerebral extravagances of Gertrude Stein, or worse, of ignoring the plain and sharp good sense of a large part of her work. Under the threat of such contraction one might even cling to what passes in "history" as her titanic egoism and unlimited pretention, as a talisman to keep up some hope of larger manners and a larger spirit. It is not in literature, surely, that we have to take in sail just yet; not, of all languages, English which at long last must stay at home and make nothing more than cultivated conversation.

The Decline of American Humor

Kenneth Rexroth

"WHAT, SIR," said Boswell, notebook in hand, "is the principal virtue?" "Whereas, Sir," said Johnson, "You know, courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other."

When *The Nation* suggested a piece on the decline of American humor I said fine, we can use Columbia's new collection of Vance Randolph and somebody else's selection of Finley Peter Dunne as pegs to hang it on: few things are funnier and fewer things today are anything like them. Unfortunately the books never came, so this story will have to be more general and sort of anticipatory. I don't know about the new selection of Mr. Dooley. Just recently I read some professor who said Dunne was an Irish dialect comedian, so, since this editor is probably a professor too, it may be a pig in a poke. But there is no doubt about Vance Randolph. He has never published a book that wasn't thoroughly satisfying, and he has done some five or six I know of: *Who Blowed Up the Church House? The Devil's Pretty Daughter, We Always Lie to Strangers, Ozark Superstitions*, all with Columbia University Press, and *Down In the Holler*, with the University of Oklahoma Press. Get them all, and the new one, too.*

This isn't TV hillbilly humor, it isn't even Al Capp or Erskine Caldwell. It is a last lingering contact with an older and better world, a thin red cord still attached to what Sherwood Anderson would have called the American Earth. The reason for the popularity of the cultural survivals of the Southern Highlands on the New York stage is that barefoot girls and one-gallus males give the subway Neanderthals somebody to look down on—no mean accomplishment. The real thing is something else again. Vance Randolph is not a professor, but an uncorrupted amateur folklorist. This is a great tradition. Our best folklore has been collected by doctors, clergymen, schoolmarms and plain people.

EVERYBODY knows that the Southern Highlands are the last refuge of the American frontier, and, from before our own, of the marches of England and Scotland and of the Scots and North Irish. But there is more to the Ozarks than Toynbee's "external proletariat." This is the home of the Green Corn Rebellion, the land where, in the evenings around the stove in the crossroads store, one literate farmer read aloud the words of Oscar Ameringer and *The Appeal to Reason*, slowly and painfully, to the tobacco-chewing approval of a leg-slapping audience. Here, if anywhere in America, was the focus of an indigenous agrarian anarchist-socialism. I have run hounds, swapped lies and drunk tiger

KENNETH REXROTH's most recent book is In Defense of Earth, *a volume of poems.*

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piss with men who would have been happy fighting with the sailors of Kronstadt. Unruly, skeptical, fearless, bawdy free thinkers, very different indeed from the originals of the term "square"—the squareheaded argarian Middle West Progressives. (Their greatest term of contempt was "scissorbill," a hick, a worker who believes that the boss has his interest at heart.) These are the key qualities of great—classic—epic—homeric—humor: a sense of the consistent principle of incongruity on which Nature, for all our science and philosophy, really operates; the realization that the accepted, official version of anything is most likely false and that all authority is based on fraud; the courage to face and act on these two conclusions.

I find it difficult to bust into roars of laughter over the long-winded racket of the majority of old-time humorists Constance Rourke has written about. I am not a passionate devotee of Sut Lovingood. But from those days to Mencken—or even to Westbrook Pegler, Damon Runyan, or Will Rogers at their best—these were the qualities that made American humor American. It was just plain lack of style that made it, in so many cases, tedious. This, once, was the blood and bone of our very own life. Out of it came our one epic hero, the only American who can walk with Ajax and Odysseus—Huck Finn.

What happened to this heritage? I'll tell you what happened to it. Not long age, in the *Vaticide Review*, a college professor, who, of all things, teaches the children of cowboys in a university in the mountains of the Wild West, wrote a "paper" conclusively demonstrating that *Huckleberry Finn* was a homosexual romance. This came about, not because the professor was himself a homosexual, but because he was moribund with the ultimate corruption of human self alienation. He just didn't know what the word "work" meant. He had never done any. He never knew anybody who had done any. *Huckleberry Finn* is our example of one of the three or four basic epic plots—maybe there are really only two. It is about the devoted comradeship of men at grips with a "morally neuter"—frivolous, the Greeks called their gods—environment, the inchoate and irresponsible flux of the universe, on which men, *working* in comradeship, impose the order of their virtues and their reason. And the first of these is courage. Life is all a great joke—but only the brave ever get the point. When William James said, "It is true if it works," this very frontier, American, sort of thing is what he meant. He meant, "If you can do *work* with it." Our professor at a cowtown university undoubtedly thinks it means, "If you can 'work' some kind of finagle with it."

INCONGRUITY? Yes—but laughter comes with the mastery of incongruity, like handling logs in a spring river, tossing sacks of wheat into a box car, making babies, or cutting a cam that works just right on your machine. When August Kekule saw his benzine ring, he laughed. In the *Laukavatara Sutra*, Buddha laughed at the vision of compounded infinitudes of universes. The great Turner picture is of "Ulysses *Deriding* Polyphemus." The tiny figure on its gaily caparisoned boat is *laughing* at the bellowing man mountain. Once these qualities go, humor falls off into effeminacy. Great humor has a savagery about it. That is why British humor stands up better than American in this country—particularly British bawdry. All the great dirty limericks, like detective stories, have English settings. It's like English cooking, which is still that of Boadicea's day. True conservatives,

The Ancient Dark

A darkness waits
there by the porch,
in the small curve
grass makes with each blade,
among the orange lilies opening
on tall stems under the apple tree;
waits in this middle summer afternoon
scraped by the shuffled steps
of that old couple passing,
their shadows heavy on the sidewalk.
My own shadow pauses
quiet in the grass.
And the ancient dark behind the shapes
of porch and grass and apple tree
turns on me in the sunlight.

R. D. McIlnay

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the English have yet to wash off all their woad.

It is for this reason that, however subversive of the established order, so many great humorists, especially satirists, Roman or British, have been Tories. The revolutionary action of humor is a deeper thing than any current politics, and the humorist tends to adopt those social attitudes which at least claim to insure him the strongest connections with the oldest, most fundamental, most humane behavior. But in America, by and large, the humorists have been radicals. You can, or at least T. S. Eliot can, create a "myth of conservatism," but it is damned hard to work up any myth of the American business community. We do not usually think of Damon Runyon as a radical, but go back and read the working-stiff dialect poetry he wrote early in the century. "It pays to git a plenty while you're gittin'." And I will never forget the time I heard Will Rogers say, "I hear the Standard Oil Company has adopted the motto, 'We Serve The Public.' Havin' growed up on a farm, I know jist what they're a gittin at." We forgive Mencken his beer cellar Nietzscheism. We forget that many years ago, Pegler was hired by Scripps-Howard for the same reason that Heywood Broun was—he was a "fearless independent." All humor must be radical in the etymological sense. Ours was also in the political. Out of the *Masses,* old and *New,* came the major cartoonists of the period. Still unsurpassed, many of them are famous today. The whole lithograph crayon technique, so closely identifed with Buck Ellis and Bob Minor, and originally developed for the IWW press, has about it the essense of autonomous indigenous American working-stiff defiance. Finley Peter Dunne (Mr. Dooley) is the author of:

> Wan iv th' sthrangest things about life is that th' poor, who need th' money th' most, ar-re th' very wans that niver have it.
>
> Don't ask f'r rights. Take thim. An' dont let anny wan give thim to ye. A right that is handed to ye fer nawthin has sometin the mather with it. It's more thin likely it's ony a wrrong turned inside out.
>
> It takes vice t' hunt vice. That accounts f'r polismen.
>
> Laws are made t' throuble people, and th' more throuble they make th' longer they shtay on the shtachoo books.
>
> If me ancestors were not what Hogan calls regicides, twas not because they wan't ready an' willin', ony a king niver came their way.

WHAT happened? Where did this kind of humor go? Don't forget, Dunne wrote this stuff for what they call the capitalist press. It went the same place the manual spark lever and the choke went on cars. They were dangerous because women hung their purses on them. Think of the environment in which Mr. Dooley was appreciated. Who rushes the growler today? How many people chew Piper Heidsick? How many smoke Five Brothers in a corn cob pipe? The distinguishing mark of our contemporary humor, what has come to be called, "*New Yorker* humor" is that it is of, for and by the great bulk of our population who are engaged in interminably busy idleness, who are never at grips with their environment, but who live by delegated powers and vicarious atonements. When they have to do something as elemental as driving a nail or mowing a lawn some whimsical disaster always takes place. Like the movies, nothing ever happens that would offend any conceivable group or section of the population, or in any way interfere with the sale of any commodity whatsoever. Nothing important must happen—it would be bad for business. A few comic strips linger on: *Moon Mullins, The Katzenjammers,* Williams' *Out Our Way.* I wonder what the TV generation thinks of them. A few towns still permit emasculated burlesque shows, but the comics are not allowed to distract from the interminable parade of strippers. Chaplin is self exiled. American radicalism lost its sense of humor long ago. And, of course, "the media" chew up everything, songs, jokes, "personalities"—365 days times twenty-four hours. What is wrong with American humor is what is wrong with American life. It is commercialism. True humor is the most effective mode of courage.

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THEATRE

Harold Clurman

HOTEL PARADISO is a harum-scarum French bedroom farce—the first, I believe, of thirty-nine pieces in a similar vein by Georges Feydeau (1864-1921). Feydeau has come to be regarded as a kind of classic in France—and rightly. His work embodies the frivolity of cosy middle-class life in that gay, wicked, captivating, creative Paris before the first world war. His dizzy farces typify one aspect of that time as much as Offenbach's operettas typify the Second Empire.

I write in this somewhat schoolroom fashion because in one sense there is little to say about *Hotel Paradiso* except that it is hilarious in a good old-fashioned manner which some of us in the empty-headed sobriety of contemporary theatrical convention might think merely silly.

Feydeau's construction and craftsmanship are masterly: young playwrights ought to make a scrupulous study of his best work. They might observe, for example, how every detail of characterization—each one of them very funny—is used to advance the plot. Feydeau's farces not only served as a model for a whole generation of popular French playwrights, but through the American Avery Hopwood helped shape the technique of several skilled journeyman dramatists of the late teens and early twenties in our country. One could trace the development of Feydeau's fabulous technique by drawing a line back through Scribe and Labiche to Molière, himself largely affected by the ribald and robust itinerant players of the Italian comedy.

Above and beyond this, however, is the Feydeau sense of fun, a kind of shrewd, good-natured, seemingly amoral humor, a combination of street raciness and sophistication which at times skirts the fringes of the great and graver French caricaturists—Daumier, Forain, et al.

This brings us to a point which, in the light of the increasing number of French plays that have been produced in New York recently, is worth repeating. The French think of the theatre as artifice—not as we do as a "mirror of life," but as a game, a playing, a happy distortion in which reality is transformed into new and odd shapes not seen in nature but nonetheless meaningful as poetry or paradox. There is nothing further from realism than the tragedies of Racine written in strictly stylized verse. Most French stage realists have been extremely ephemeral writers, so that it is possible to predict that even Rostand will outlive Henri Becque. In the period between the two world wars the outstanding French playwright, Jean Giraudoux, remained a poet-fantasist, and Jean Anouilh today, for all his approximations of realism, resolutely follows in the same tradition of the theatre of the mask, the theatre which regards all "true-to-life" (documentary) realism as somehow crude and inartistic. It is this difference that makes French drama difficult for us to evaluate.

ALEC GUINNESS was the star of *Hotel Paradiso* in London; here it is Bert Lahr. Since Guinness is a dry-point artist and Bert Lahr an extraordinary clown, Peter Glenville who directed in both cities has wisely made the New York production louder, faster, closer to burlesque. The change, I believe, helps our audiences, which can more readily accept departures from realism when they are unmistakable.

Neither the London nor the New York production is exactly "French." It is impossible for non-Frenchmen literally to reproduce the French theatrical touch —nor is it necessarily desirable.

ART

Maurice Grosser

THE Metropolitan museum displays, until May 5, a body of pictures collected for the New Museum at Sao Paulo, Brazil. These pictures are not from Brazilian sources—the greatest number not yet having been seen in Brazil—but are the works acquired here and in Europe during the last ten years for a Brazilian National collection.

The pictures are numerous, the general quality is extremely high. Some seem to me to have suffered from restoration or excessive repairing—notably the Poussin and the Bellini—and some are perhaps not a particular artist's finest work. Nevertheless, for a collection assembled so quickly and so recently, the number of first class examples is surprising. There are, to mention only a few, a fine Greco *Annunciation*; a handsome Zurbaran, a *St. Anthony of Padua*, with all of this artist's extraordinary

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paint quality; a small, jewel-like *Resurrection* attributed to Raphael, and four quite astonishing Nattiers—the daughters of Louis XV got up as the four elements—the last word in French mid-eighteenth century suavity and elegance. The more recent painting is even better represented, to mention only the Corot portraits, some remakable Cézannes (a view of l'Estaque, a pine tree and the *Negro Scipio*), the Renoir nudes, the Degas sculpture, some celebrated early Picassos, and one of the ugliest Van Goghs it has ever been my pleasure to inspect.

A collection of this sort is badly needed in Brazil. That pleasant country has a vigorous contemporary art movement. Pictures today are esteemed, painted and sold. But although the land has always had a tradition of architecture and sculpture—witness the colonial churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the sculptured figures of Aleijadinho in the state of Minas Gerais, and even the delightful clay playthings made in Pernambuco today—there has been no corresponding tradition of painting. And there is nowhere an acceptable collection of art, either native or imported, available to the public. The Brazilian painter who cannot study abroad has had until now only reproductions of pictures to acquaint him with the complicated tradition of oil painting, and these approximations can tell him nothing about color, paint quality or scale.

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N 4

THE Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is showing through May 19 the winners and runners-up of the first of its annual national and international prize competitions. While I do not believe that this exhibit furnishes a complete description of all kinds of contemporary painting, it can be taken as a description of the kinds of painting which receive prizes in this decade. To win a prize in the seventies a picture had to relate an anecdote, usually one containing a female nude. In the nineteen-tens, a Renaissance composition or a Pointillist technique was necessary—preferably both. Today, to win a prize, a picture should be large and free of references to the visual world. If, however, an image is presented, this image must serve only as a supporting framework for some painting trick which is in reality the picture's subject. The trick is usually one of paint texture or of paint application, like dripping or painting with a six-inch brush; perhaps a self-imposed trade-mark, like using only black and white; or it may be a trick of stylistic reference—to disassociative Cubism, or to mechanical drawing, or to children's painting. The importance of the image is thus minimized and the picture is rendered neutral and inoffensive. The trick provides exhibition brilliance and the large size gives museum importance.

I DO NOT wish to imply that the pictures in the present exhibition are not striking and for the most part strikingly handsome. I only question their ability to hold our interest for any length of time. Indeed, of the international prize winner painted by Ben Nicholson, I can remember only that it was pale color, painted on what appeared to be a gesso preparation, and contained some neat black curves.

From lack of exhibition space, only the prize winners are shown continuously; the runners-up are rotated. The day I was there, Belgium, among the national sections, was handsomely represented by *Ant Hill* of Pierre Alechinsky—a pleasant tan non-objective picture in the all-over calligraphic manner—and by *Domain of Lights* of the prize winner Magritte—a house exterior lit by both twilight and electric light—whose impact comes from its anachronistic and perverse adoption of an old-fashioned chromo style. In fact it is not unlike a Maxfield Parrish. Yugoslavia showed up well with the monumental *Struggle of Horses* by the prize winner Petar Lubardia, reminiscent of fresco. France was badly represented by the ugly *Weight of Water* by André Beaudin, going back, with its thin colors and hard angular lines, to the decorative styles of the Paris Exposition of 1925; and by the prize winning picture of Marcel Gromaire, a view of the Isle de la Cité, a heavy painting whose trick is to impose a proto-Cubist lattice in black and brown on a recognizable landscape. Gordon Smyth in *Painting with Red and Black*, and Takao Tanabe in *Portrait of an Interior Land*, both from Canada and both in the non-objective styles, achieved quite beautiful color, as did Jens Soendergaard, the Danish prize winner, in his *Winter Landscape*—Fauve influence with foreground figures like children's painting. The Italian prize winner, Emilio Vedova's *From a Cycle of Protest 1956, N.2 (Sicily)*, in the Action painting style, has also handsome color. John Bratby, United Kingdom winner, showed *Jean and Still Life*, the first of the much talked about Kitchen Sink pictures I have yet seen—a nude seated behind a kitchen table strewn with packaged foods, painted in a somewhat linear Fauvist manner and whose shock value comes from the unrelieved tedium of the lower middle class background it depicts—not at all a characteristic prize winner. I found it somewhat disappointing.

ON SHOW at Knoedler and Co. until May 4 and after that at the Fogg Museum in Cambridge from May 16 to September 15, is a part of the modern pictures collected by Louise and Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. Its general effect is extremely handsome and it contains some notable examples. One finds a charming Pissarro—a snow scene in pale, clear colors; a delightfully informal portrait by Vuillard, *Woman in Green*; three glowing still lifes by Bonnard; a very gay landscape by Kokoschka, the beach at Biarritz with bright color and lively drawing; a large collection of Picassos containing among others the *Fireplace* of 1916 and the *Harlequin* of 1918, both masterful Cubist compositions if somewhat cold in color, the *Woman in Blue* of 1949—a seated woman with both full face and profile, in what I have always thought of as this painter's playing card style, in unusually beautiful color—and a seated nude of 1953 which achieves ugliness by every means at a painter's command. The two Braque still lifes (of 1917 and 1919) are as fine as any I have seen, and there are two Matisses. The one, *Bathers with a*

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Turtle of 1908, companion piece I believe to the celebrated *La Dance*, is huge, imposing and in every way distressing to the spectator. The other, *The Conservatory*, of 1938, I find a charming and trivial valentine. There is a particularly lovely Klee, *Anchored*, of 1932 —schematized boats on a grey ground covered with tiny square dots in most brilliant colors, apparently a good-natured parody of Seurat. There are three important Rouaults, a tender Modigliani portrait, a witty still life by Max Beckman, and an impressive *Dancer* in bronze by Lipchitz. It is a collection worth visiting.

FILMS

Robert Hatch

PADDY CHAYEFSKY employs a technique of fanatic verisimilitude to tell cheerfully tearful fables about humble, dull and defeated men. Evidence not at all unlike Chayefsky's has made social critics from the time of Swift curse the race that bore them, but there is no trace of rage in this happy singer of the lowest common denominator.

I admire the care with which he reproduces the unformed ideas, slovenly speech, slouching attitudes and mass behavior of his submerged mediocrities, but the result of this great painstaking bores me. And I resent the implication that the good life is a scared eking out of existence that would have seemed doleful to a slave of the pharoahs.

The Bachelor Party, which is the second of Chayefsky's movie adaptations from television, recounts a soggy evening on the town by five office clerks, one of whom is about to be married. The groom-to-be wonders why he is doing it (except for his mother, women frighten him), and looking at the sheepish misery of his married friends I wonder with him. They are all trapped—life is a trap and heroism consists, apparently, in not chewing off your leg to escape. Though I doubt that any of them would have the wit or courage to carry out the amputation. The picture ends "happily" because one of the merrymakers comes reeling home in the dawn to tell his wife that he loves her even though she is pregnant. God help them both.

The secret of television's hypnosis is that it gives you an illusion of actuality and of prying into the private lives of your fellows. Chayefsky achieves this illusion in fiction by creating a human landscape so featureless and arid that it seems impossible anyone could deliberately invent it. There is also the implied flattery of seeing that people just as flat and hopeless as you are yourself are thought worth the attention of a very successful writer. Maybe there is more value to the crummy grind than you had realized. There isn't—that is just another illusion—but as long as there are sponsors on TV no Paddy Chayefsky is going to tell the great American consumer that his life is a spectacle to make a rock weep.

ANOTHER adaptation from television, *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose, is a brilliantly constructed and executed melodrama of personality. It is the author's intention, I believe, to celebrate the institution of trial by jury, but his instinct for conflict, surprise and colorful psychology makes the process as alarming as Russian roulette.

Twelve Angry Men is a dramatic contrivance. It is rigged for thrills and its tricks are more exciting than persuasive. A jury that begins its deliberations by voting eleven to one (Henry Fonda dissenting) to convict a Puerto Rican boy of murdering his father, moves by a process of threats, insults, psychological exposure and ingenious detective work to a verdict of acquittal. Mr. Fonda is hampered in his persuasive efforts by a juror (Lee Cobb) who was once thrashed by his own son, by another (Ed Begley) who hates Puerto Ricans, and by a third (Jack Warden) who wants to get to a ball game. But he is a detective of rare talent and demolishes the prosecution case by a series of sensational retroactive deductions (the defense attorney must have been incompetent to the point of malpractice) and his integrity reduces the opposition to hysteria and the absolution of tears. This is Walter Mitty's finest dream.

But these are views in retrospect; while it goes on, *Twelve Angry Men* is a gripper. Sidney Lumet, directing his first film, sustains a tight thread; he takes advantage of the cramped jury room to set up inventive action and tableaus. And he is blessed with a cast of brilliant character actors who, though they comprise an almost incredibly his-

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trionic jury, keep the picture snapping with curses, sneers, accusations and the brandishing of knives.

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But again I get the feeling that the people who are preaching it don't really believe the sermon. They don't quite see how a kid with money in his pocket, a car of his own and good meals at regular hours could become a menace to the peace of the community. So they stack the cards against their hero with a humorless vengeance. This boy's dad, a big Hollywood executive, is an egotistical sadist with a cute sense of humor; the boy is framed by a vindictive theatre manager; the detective is as obtuse as a wall; the mother is numb with troubles of her own. The boy knocks the manager down once and everyone cries "hoodlum"; he goes back and knocks him down again and everyone immediately understands the obvious. The father discovers that he loves his son and—what I don't believe —the boy loves his father. Pictures like this mean well, but their psychology is no deeper than a new paint job.

Graven Images

Come wind and glazing weather,
Put a shine on autumn's sleeve.
Strip trees in September,
Freeze lakes in October.
When birds fly in November,
For comfort we will have
Dark shadows frozen under,
And on stiff skies above,
Pale shadows freezing over.

And we will believe,
When plodding turtles plunder
Dying lily pads
For their bellies' patterned wonder,
Ice makes a fragile grave.
In the lake the lilies slumber.
On the lake the turtles live,
Their old backs brown as lumber.

Come spring leaves will encumber
The lake with scaly armor,
And we will remember
How their forms dissolve.
The dark shell will sprout clover.
The thin birds flying cover
Will be haloes come to hover
On each loss we grieve
With a residue of love.

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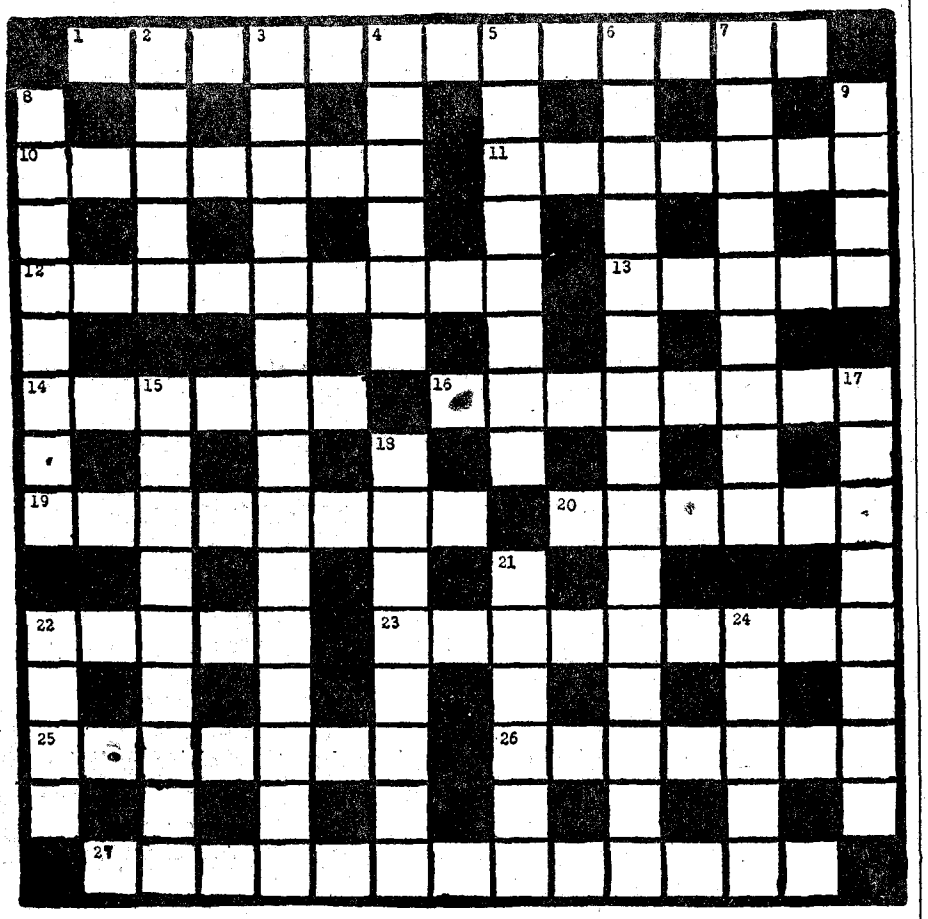

ACROSS:

1 See 22 down
10 Give a right name. (7)
11 With trauma, perhaps. (7)
12 Not mindful of being extremely obvious. (9)
13 and 8 down. Doesn't spread the news about 27, it is hand being short. (5, 8)
14 The way things flourish in South River. (6)
16 Decoration to make a vase more neat, perhaps. (8)
19 Things about a soldier that takes a final effort for the record book. (8)
20 Puts on the play, or just coaches? (6)
22 Stop tickling! There's a nerve inside! (5)
23 A hundred on six, and six on a half-hundred, with happy results. (9)
25 It alone can give you a lift. (7)
26 Drink around after being in with the preacher. (7)
27 They are sometimes measured by their net worth. (6, 7)

DOWN:

2 This day might be 23 in Brazil or South Africa. (5)
3 A worker takes the four-four with one part being a humane belief. (15)
4 State the alternative, for example, on this. (6)
5 The agent responsible for May's rise. (8)
6 Feel averse to marriage? (Certainly not an aim of the single-minded). (6, 9)
7 Changing the path of the outer ring. (9)
8 See 13 across.
9 Notice it gives access? (4)
15 Correct expression (but one can't complain he doesn't know which way to turn). (5, 4)
17 See a girl in the proper light, in the good old days. (8)
18 Copies the cat's grin, it seems. (8)
21 Legally, settle on a person, or involve as a consequence. (6)
22 and 1 across If a port-hole is first, it had better be the rest. (4, 3, 5, 5)
24 Yes, plans might be necessary to make 27 put a body away. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 720

ACROSS: 1 ART IS LONG; 10 ENTRAPS; 11 and 18 BOWLING ALLEY; 12 STRIATE; 13 EWE; 15 MANIAC; 17 EXTEND; 19 REPAST; 22 EDITED; 25 and 6 across ASSAILED; 27 SINCERE; 28 TORPEDO; 30 INITIAL; 31 AUDIENT; 32 ERNES; 33 SANDSTONE. DOWN: 1 A-BOMB; 2 THE SWAN; 3 STAMINA; 4 and 20 OLD AGE PENSION; 5 GREASE; 6 ANTHRAX; 7 LEAFAGE; 8 DESCENDED; 15 MARKS TIME; 16 and 14 CATWALKS; 17 and 26 EYESTRAIN; 21 SPECIES; 23 DERIDES; 24 THERETO; 25 AEOLUS; 29 and 9 ON THE ONE HAND.

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Frank Edwards Returns!

Frank Edwards, popular liberal news analyst, has been returned to radio as the direct result of a letter-writing campaign by readers of *The Independent*.

The Edwards radio comeback marks the first important challenge to a decade-long trend against liberal commentators. News analysts who were not in the right-wing camp or who were not rigid neutrals found themselves on the outside listening in.

Frank Edwards is being sponsored by the Pabst Brewing Company, one of America's 100 largest corporations.

How did it happen?

Some months ago, Lyle Stuart, editor of *The Independent*, learned that the Pabst Brewing Company had expressed a mild interest in the possibility of sponsoring Edwards.

However, Stuart also learned that Pabst's advertising agency opposed the move because Edwards was "controversial."

The question then was would Edwards sell Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer? We felt that he could. And so, in the editorial column of *The Independent* Lyle Stewart urged his readers to write to the President of Pabst and offer to support Pabst beer if Pabst would sponsor Edwards.

The response was so overwhelming (more than 10,000 letters, cards, telegrams and petitions) that Pabst immediately bought premium time on WLS (Chicago) and in doing so had to buy one-half hour nightly to clear 15 minutes a night for Frank Edwards.

Edwards is also being heard on WEEK in Peoria.

As Pabst Blue Ribbon beer sales rise in those cities, radio stations in other cities will be added to the schedule.

The Pabst company gave Edwards an unusually strong sendoff. Company officials announced that Edwards was being encouraged to be himself: to sift and evaluate the news, with strict adherence to truth, logic and reality—and with no punches pulled.

The purpose of this message is twofold. It is to tell you that Edwards has been returned to radio . . . and to encourage you to drink Pabst when you drink beer — in appreciation of this company's action in bringing Edwards back to radio.

It is also to point out to you that you miss a great deal if you don't now receive *The Independent*.

Pabst Public Relations Director Andrew H. Talbot wrote in a letter to us: "It was *The Independent* that started this ball rolling. I am very pleased that it worked out."

Bringing Frank Edwards back to radio is only one of the many ways *The Independent* has shown its effectiveness in recent months.

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Or better still, send $3 for a one-year subscription ($5 for 2 years, $7 for 3 years) and we will start *The Independent* on its way to you by return mail.

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